DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 249 222 SP 025 350

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TITLE	Individualized Teaching: Writing Individualized Education Programs.
INSTITUTION	Minnesota Univ., Minneapolis. National Support Systems Project.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (ED), Washington, DC. Div. of Personnel Preparation.
PUB DATE	[82]
GRANT	OEG007902045
NOTE	123p.; For other modules in this series, see ED 238 844 and SP 025 332-354. For the genesis of these modules, see ED 186 399. Reviewed by Marleen C. Pugach and Ann P. Turnbull.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Educational Diagnosis; Higher Education; *Individualized Education Programs; Learning Modules; *Mainstreaming; Parent School Relationship; Preservice Teacher Education; Student Evaluation; Student Needs; *Teacher Education Curriculum; *Teacher Educators
IDENTIFIERS	Education for All Handicapped Children Act

ABSTRACT

This module (part of a series of 24 modules) is on writing individualized education programs (IEPs). The genesis of these materials is in the 10 "clusters of capabilities," outlined in the paper, "A Common Body of Practice for Teachers: The Challenge of Public Law 94-142 to Teacher Education." These clusters form the proposed core of professional knowledge needed by teachers in the future. The module is to be used by teacher educators to reexamine and enhance their current practice in preparing classroom teachers to work competently and comfortably with children who have a wide range of individual needs. The module includes objectives, scales for assessing the degree to which the identified knowledge and practices are prevalent in an existing teacher education program, and self-assessment test items. Topics discussed in this module include responsibility and accountability, student referral, the multidisciplinary evaluation approach, IEP team meetings, IEP contents, and IEPs at the secondary school level. Bibliographic references and articles expanding on the subject of developing skills in writing IEPs for mainstreamed students are included. (JD)

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ED249222

INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHING:
WRITING INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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SP 025 350

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This paper presents one module in a series of resource materials which are designed for use by teacher educators. The genesis of these materials is in the ten "clusters of capabilities," outlined in the paper, "A Common Body of Practice for Teachers: The Challenge of Public Law 94-142 to Teacher Education" (published by the National Support Systems Project), which form the proposed core of professional knowledge needed by professional teachers who will practice in the world of tomorrow. The resource materials are to be used by teacher educators to reexamine and enhance their current practice in preparing classroom teachers to work competently and comfortably with children who have a wide range of individual needs. Each module provides further elaboration of a specified "cluster of capabilities" - in this case, Individualized Teaching: Writing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

Extending the Challenge:
Working Toward a Common Body of Practice for Teachers

Concerned educators have always wrestled with issues of excellence and professional development. It is argued, in the paper "A Common Body of Practice for Teachers: The Challenge of Public Law 94-142 to Teacher Education,"* that the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 provides the necessary impetus for a concerted reexamination of teacher education. Further, it is argued that this reexamination should enhance the process of establishing a body of knowledge common to the members of the teaching profession. The paper continues, then, by outlining clusters of capabilities that may be included in the common body of knowledge. These clusters of capabilities provide the basis for the following materials.

The materials are oriented toward assessment and development. First, the various components, rating scales, self-assessments, sets of objectives, and respective rationale and knowledge bases are designed to enable teacher educators to assess current practice relative to the knowledge, skills, and commitments outlined in the aforementioned paper. The assessment is conducted not necessarily to determine the worthiness of a program or practice, but rather to reexamine current practice in order to articulate essential common elements of teacher education. In effect then, the "challenge" paper and the ensuing materials incite further discussion regarding a common body of practice for teachers.

Second and closely aligned to assessment is the developmental perspective offered by these materials. The assessment process allows the user to view current practice on a developmental continuum; therefore, desired or more appropriate practice is readily identifiable. On another, perhaps more important dimension, the "challenge" paper and these materials focus discussion on preservice teacher education. In making decisions regarding a common body of practice it is essential that specific knowledge, skill, and commitment be acquired at the preservice level. It is also essential that other additional specific knowledge, skill, and commitment be acquired as a teacher is inducted into the profession and matures with years of experience. Differentiating among these levels of professional development is paramount. These materials can be used in forums in which focused discussion will explicate better the necessary elements of preservice teacher education. This explication will then allow more productive discourse on the necessary capabilities of beginning teachers and the necessary capabilities of experienced teachers.

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*Published by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Washington, DC, 1980. ($5.50)

In brief, this work is an effort to capitalize on the creative ferment of the teaching profession in striving toward excellence and professional development. The work is to be viewed as evolutionary and formative. Contributions from our colleagues are heartily welcomed.

Contents

Within this module are the following components:

Set of Objectives - The objectives focus on the teacher educator and identify what can be expected as a result of working through the materials. The objectives also apply to preservice teachers; they are statements about skills, knowledge, and attitudes which should be part of the "common body of practice" of all teachers. Page 1

Rating Scales - Scales are included by which a teacher educator could, in a cursory way, assess the degree to which the knowledge and practices identified in this module are prevalent in the existing teacher-training program. The rating scales also provide a catalyst for further thinking in each area. Page 2

Self Assessment - Specific test items were developed to determine a user's working knowledge of the major concepts and principles in each subtopic. The self assessment may be used as a pre-assessment to determine whether one would find it worthwhile to go through the module or as a self check after the materials have been worked through. The self assessment items also can serve as examples of mastery test questions for students. Page 4

Rationale and Knowledge Base - This section summarizes the knowledge base and empirical support for selected topics on writing IEPs. The more salient concepts and strategies are reviewed. A few brief simulations/activities and questions have been integrated with the rationale and knowledge base. This section includes the following topics: Page 9

Introduction Page 9

Glossary of Terms Page 11

Responsibility and Accountability Page 15

Referral of Students to the School Based Committee Page 18

The Multidisciplinary Approach to Evaluation Page 28

The IEP Team Meeting Page 30

The Contents of the IEP Page 40

IEPs at the Secondary School Level Page 57

Bibliography - A partial bibliography of important books, articles, and materials is included after the list of references. Page 80

Articles - Related brief articles (reproduced with author's permission) accompany the aforementioned components. The articles support and expand on the knowledge base. Page 82

V

Objectives of the Module

The purpose of this module is:

1. To explain the basic principles of Public Law 94-142 which relate to the IEP process.
2. To define terms germane to the topic of individualized programming.
3. To describe the procedural requirements of the IEP process.
4. To describe the referral process.
5. To discuss the multidisciplinary approach to the IEP process and its benefits.
6. To demonstrate a procedure for writing annual goals and short term objectives.
7. To describe various monitoring systems for the IEP objectives.
8. To desvribe and use one sample format for writing IEPs.
9. To discuss various issues assoicated with the IEP that are unique to secondary schools.

Reasonable Objectives for a Teacher Education Program

The following are objectives that any teacher education program could reasonably set for itself in preparing teachers to participate in the IEP process:

1. To familiarize students with the rationale and purpose for developing IEPs.

2. To inform students of the content and procedures required in developing IEPs.

3. To provide students with basic knowledge and proficiency in areas directly related to developing IEPs, e.g.,
    a. assessing students' current academic functioning.
    b. writing annual goals related to current functioning.
    c. writing short-term objectives related to current functioning and goals.

4. To provide students with basic knowledge and proficiency for monitoring student progress toward goals and objectives outlined in the IEP.

Rating Scale for Teacher Preparation Program

Check the statement that best describes the level of preparation of your teacher education program's graduates for participating in the IEP process.

____ 1. Students being prepared for teaching are aware that they will have exceptional students in their classes but are unaware of the formal program planning required for such students by school personnel.

____ 2. Students being prepared for teaching are aware of the general requirement for an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) for each exceptional student in their class and perhaps are even aware of the general content of IEPs, but generally the topic is treated as in the domain of special education.

____ 3. Students being prepared for teaching are taught about the specific information and procedures required in developing IEPs, are taught of the regular class teacher's potential role in the process, and are provided with examples of how they can contribute to the usefulness of the program plan developed.

____ 4. Students being prepared for teaching are trained in specific skills required in developing IEPs (e.g., assessment of students' present levels of functioning, writing appropriate goals and objectives, and monitoring students' progress) and are shown how these skills are applicable to content and procedural requirements of IEPs.

____ 5. Students being prepared for teaching are trained in specific skills required for IEP development (e.g., assessment of students' present levels of functioning, writing appropriate goals and objectives, and monitoring students' progress) and receive experience in using these skills in working as a team member to develop IEPs for students with special needs.

Self Assessment

Fill in the Blanks:

1. Name six major principles contained in "The Education for All Handicapped Children Act" of 1975 (Public Law 94-142):

2. The written commitment by the public agency to appropriately serve handicapped children and youth is called the ______________________.

3. The rules and regulations which are guidelines for the implementation of P. L. 94-142 were first published in ____________ .

4. According to the rules and regulations, the term "handicapped children" includes the following categories:

5. List six supports included under "related services":

6. List the three required participants in the IEP meeting:

7. Name the two participants who are only sometimes included in the IEP meeting: ______________________

8. List the five required content areas of the IEP: ____________________

____

____

____

True or False?

_____ 9. The IEP is a legally binding contract.

_____ 10. Not all disabled youngsters are considered to be "handicapped."

_____ 11. The right to an appropriate education for handicapped students means the right to be educated in the regular classroom.

_____ 12. If a handicapped student is placed out of state, the state of residence is responsible for writing the student's IEP and ensuring its implementation.

_____ 13. The state educational agency must ensure that ongoing inservice training programs are available to all personnel who are engaged in the education of handicapped students.

_____ 14. The placement decision could be made by one person if that person is a responsible evaluator.

_____ 15. Written notice to parents is required before the public agency proposes or refuses to initiate or change the educational placement of a child.

_____ 16. Parental consent is required only on two occasions: before conducting a preplacement evaluation and before initial placement of a handicapped student in a special education program.

_____ 17. If a handicapped student is enrolled in regular and special education, the classroom teacher must be the teacher representative on the IEP team.

_____ 18. At the secondary level, when handicapped students are likely to have several teachers, all teachers must attend the IEP meeting.

_____ 19. For a handicapped student who has been evaluated for the first time, a member of the evaluation team must participate in the IEP meeting.

_____ 20. The IEP must be in effect at the beginning of the school year.

_____ 21. Instructional objectives are more detailed than lesson plans.

_____ 22. It is not important that objectives are particularly useful to teachers as long as they are appropriate for the individual student.

_____ 23. The IEP must include evaluation procedures and schedules to determine whether instructional objectives are being achieved.

_____ 24. The total educational program for all handicapped students must be described in the annual goals and instructional objectives in the IEPs.

_____ 25. Vocational education includes programs designed to lead to employment or to a higher degree.

_____ 26. Vocational goals and objectives must be written into the IEP if special modifications are necessary.

_____ 27. The evaluation component of the IEP is intended to hold teachers accountable if the student does not achieve the growth projected in the objectives.

_____ 28. The format and length of the IEP are prescribed by law.

Multiple Choice

29. IEPs are required only for those students who need

a. specialized programming.
b. crutches or a wheelchair.
c. tutorial help.
d. regular class placement to benefit from their schooling experience.

30. A student is not considered handicapped under the federal regulations unless his/her impairment is severe enough to warrant

a. special class placement.
b. institutional care.
c. physical adaptations.
d. special education.

31. An IEP must be implemented within what period of time after it is developed?

a. 10 days b. one month c. as soon as possible d. one year

32. If a private facility implements a student's IEP, responsibility for compliance rests with the

a. private facility.
b. public agency.
c. state education agency.
d. both a & b
e. both b & c
f. a, b, & c

33. All handicapped students must be educated in the

a. regular classroom.
b. least restrictive appropriate environment.
c. mainstream.
d. public school.

34. To determine whether objectives are being accomplished, evaluation of the student's progress must legally occur at least once a

a. day. b. week. c. month. d. year.

35. The group that can be served under Public Law 94-142 as of 1980 includes handicapped youngsters in what age group ?

a. 0-21 b. 3-21 c. 5-18 d. 5-21

(Not all states include services for this entire age group.)

Self Assessment Key

1. Zero reject
   Nondiscriminatory classification
   Individualized education programs
   Least restrictive appropriate placement
   Procedural due process
   Parental participation

2. Individualized Education Program (IEP)

3. 1977

4. Mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, deaf-blind, multi-handicapped, specific learning disabilities.

5. Any six: transportation, speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, early identification and assessment, student and parent counseling, medical and school health services, social work.

6. A representative of the public agency who is qualified to provide or supervise special education, the student's teacher, the student's parent(s).

7. The child, when appropriate, and other individuals at the discretion of the parent or agency.

8. Student's present level of functioning. Annual goals and short-term objectives. Extent of regular and special education to be provided. Projected dates for initiation and duration of services. Evaluation procedures and schedules.

9. F
10. T
11. F
12. T
13. T
14. F
15. T
16. T
17. F
18. F
19. T
20. T
21. F
22. F
23. T
24. F
25. T
26. T
27. F
28. F
29. a
30. d
31. c
32. e
33. b
34. d
35. b

Individualized Teaching:
Writing Individualized Education Programs

Introduction

Public Law (P. L.) 94-142, "The Education for All Handicapped Children Act" of 1975, contains six major principles: zero reject, least restrictive appropriate placement, nondiscriminatory evaluation, procedural due process, parental participation, and individualized education programs or "IEPs" (Turnbull & Turnbull, 1978).

In essence, this law requires that the public school system provide all school-aged handicapped youngsters with a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment that is conducive to learning. The age group permitted to be served under P. L. 94-142 includes those children and youth aged 3-21. Some states include students aged 3-5 and 18-21, but others serve only handicapped youngsters within the same age bracket as their non-handicapped peers who are entitled to a free public education. In either case, public schools cannot reject students simply on the basis of their handicaps and schools must provide placement options to accommodate students with special needs.

In addition, nondiscriminatory evaluative tools that accurately reflect youngsters' strengths and weaknesses must be used to classify students as handicapped and to aid in planning educational programs suited to individual needs. Within this process of identifying, placing, and providing educational programs, parents are guaranteed the right to participate in their child's educational planning and are guaranteed due process safeguards to protect that right.

The final and key principle is the individual prescription. A public responsibility for the recognition of unique special needs among school-aged children and youth is the central theme of P. L. 94-142. The IEP is the written commitment by the public school system to serve those needs appropriately. Although many educators and advocates recognize the importance of designing programs to meet individual needs, the perfunctory manipulation of graphics is not enough to ensure an appropriate education for handicapped students. The effectiveness of well-designed programs will depend upon the quality of the IEP process and implementation, not merely on a document.

Too often the IEP process is ill-conceived and the products are useless to implementers of the program. It is, therefore, essential that the IEP process is efficient and the tangible results serve parents and professionals as management tools for coordinating services for students. Aiding school personnel in writing beneficial IEPs is the goal of this module.

Legal note. This module gives an overview of the IEP process and includes several references to two sets of federal guidelines. The boxed citations quote the Federal Register, either from the original rules and regulations for the "Implementation of Part B of the Education of the Handicapped Act" (August 23, 1977, Volume 42, Number 163) or from its clarification of the IEP requirement called "Assistance to States for Education of Handicapped Children: Interpretation of the Individualized Education Program (IEP)" (January 19, 1981, Volume 46, Number 12).

Many questions have arisen concerning the meaning and implementation of the IEP provisions of the statute and regulations; therefore, a comprehensive document was published that clarifies the IEP requirements, answers some of the most frequently asked questions about the provisions, and provides technical assistance to interested parties. The IEP Interpretation represents the perspectives and intentions of those persons responsible for the original specifications of the rules and regulations. The effective date of enactment is indefinite at this time.

The regulations and the IEP Interpretation provide a framework for the module and reflect the thinking of many advocates for handicapped citizens, government officials, educators, parents, and laypersons; however, mainstreaming and individualized teaching do not depend upon these mandates. P. L. 94-142 is preceded by right-to-education judicial decisions and civil rights legislation which provide much of its foundation. Although federal legislation, state laws, and local regulations are dynamic, this module will continue to represent sound educational strategies for meeting the individual needs of students.

Activities

1. *Find out if your state's public school system serves handicapped students aged 3-5 and 18-21. Are nonhandicapped students provided an education at public expense in those age brackets?*
2. *Name 4 educational placements other than the regular classroom that might be the least restrictive appropriate alternatives for certain students. Then, imagine a situation in which a handicapped youngster is not allowed to participate in the regular classroom in the public school and, yet, still receives a free, appropriate public education.*
3. *Create a brief case study for a student whose least restrictive, most appropriate placement is not in the regular classroom.*

Glossary of Terms

According to the 1977 regulations for implementing P. L. 94-142, at the beginning of each school year. . .

> . . .each public agency shall have in effect an individualized education program for every handicapped child who is receiving special education from that agency.
>
> (Sec. 300.342(a))

Three phrases may need clarification: individualized education program, handicapped, and special education. The rules and regulations continue:

> . . .the term "individualized education program" means a written statement for a handicapped child that is developed and implemented in accordance with sections 300.341-300.349.
>
> (Sec. 300.340)

The specifics of development and implementation will be discussed in later sections. The definition stated above implies a rather concise plan in the form of a "written statement" that adheres to certain specifications for each student labeled as handicapped. The regulations list and define those conditions that are considered handicapping:

> . . .the term "handicapped children" means those children evaluated in accordance with sections 300.530-300.534 as being mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired, deaf-blind, multi-handicapped, or as having specific learning disabilities, who because of those impairments need special education and related services.
>
> (Sec. 300.5)

Each term is further defined in terms of impeding educational performance. While disability means lack of a certain ability or capacity, a handicap involves a disadvantage or penalty. Therefore, not all disabled youngsters are considered handicapped, only those whose impairments hamper them enough to warrant special education. For instance, a hearing impaired student using a hearing aid may overcome this handicap with no need for any further special provisions. IEPs are required only for those students who need specialized programming to benefit from this schooling experience.

The regulations define special education as

> . . .specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of a handicapped child, including classroom instruction, instruction in physical education, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions.
>
> (Sec. 300.14(a)(1))

With reference to special education, the regulations further state the following:

> The term also includes vocational education if it consists of specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a handicapped child.
>
> (Sec. 300.14(a)(3))

Vocational education includes industrial arts, consumerism, home economics, and other organized education programs designed to lead to employment or a higher degree.

The concept of special education is particularly important since students are not considered handicapped under these regulations unless their impairments are severe enough to warrant special education. The need for special instruction arises, not because of a label or category of handicapping condition, but because of special educational needs. An IEP must be written regardless of the severity of the handicap as long as the student is deemed eligible to receive services; however, this specially designed instruction may not involve the student's entire educational program.

For instance, Steve is a high school student of average intelligence who is in a wheelchair because he is paraplegic and cannot use his legs. Except for access considerations, some special adaptations in his industrial arts shop and science lab, and an adaptive physical education program, Steve requires no further specialized instruction in his academic subjects. On the other hand, Sue is an emotionally handicapped seventh grader who attends a half day special program and requires special behavioral objectives in all of her academic classes. In both cases, the IEP objectives reflect special educational needs but Sue's IEP will be more comprehensive than Steve's. The success of the specialized instruction may be dependent upon related services.

> As used in this part, the term "related services" means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education, and includes speech pathology and audiology, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. The term also includes school health services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.13(a))

Every handicapped child receiving special education had to have a written IEP by October 1, 1977 when the rules and regulations were first published. Now an IEP. . .

> . . .must be in effect before special education and related services are provided to a child;
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.342(b)(1))

and it must be implemented as soon as possible after the required meetings. The IEP Interpretation describes the phrase "to be in effect" as meaning that the IEP has been developed properly, is regarded to be appropriate by both parents and public agency, and will be implemented as written. These guidelines are attempts to insure that sufficient planning will precede the delivery of special education services, yet no undue delay will hinder the provision of an appropriate education for handicapped youngsters.

To summarize--a handicapped person is one who requires special education and related services; special education is specially designed instruction to meet individual needs; related services are those supports needed for a handicapped person to benefit from special education; and an IEP must be appropriately written before these special services begin.

Activities

1. *How many handicapped people have you ever met? How many of your friends are handicapped? It may be interesting and instructive*

to ask a handicapped person to visit your class.

2. *A disability is an impaired ability or the lack of ability to do certain tasks, use certain parts of the body, or perform certain bodily functions. A handicap involves the interaction of a disability with the environment; thus, some disabilities only become handicaps in certain situations. Discuss the "six-hour handicap", that is, the disability which only becomes a handicap at school. Give examples of such handicaps and possible causes of the phenomenon.*
3. *Most orthopedic impairments and many health impairments can be seen; that is, they are visible. Name several "invisible handicaps."*
4. *What related services are available in your school district or county? What problems in providing related services might result from a school district that is very small? from one that is very large? from a rural district?*

Responsibility and Accountability

Beginning September 1, 1978, a free, appropriate public education could no longer be denied to school-aged handicapped children, according to P. L. 94-142. By the beginning of school year 1980-81, this right was extended to handicapped individuals aged 3-5 and 18-21 in states providing an education for nonhandicapped youngsters in this expanded age bracket. The right to an appropriate education involves appropriate placement and instruction, and the mechanism for defining this right is the IEP. This right does not dictate that all handicapped students will be taught individually nor in the mainstream of the regular classroom; rather, the intent of the IEP is to establish clear management procedures for educating handicapped students in the least restrictive setting so that appropriate goals may be achieved.

The ultimate responsibility for compliance with the regulations rests with the State Education Agency (SEA) which must insure that each public agency develops and implements an IEP for each of its handicapped students. In cases in which the appropriate placement of a student is in a private school or facility, the public agency is still responsible for initiating and conducting a meeting to develop the student's IEP before private services begin, even if the private facility plans to implement the program. State agencies are responsible for ensuring that an IEP is developed and implemented for each handicapped student enrolled in a private or parochial facility who receives special education and related services from a public agency.

If a student is placed out of state, the home state is responsible for writing the student's IEP and ensuring that it is implemented. The responsibilities of the "receiving" state and its effected facilities must be specified in an agreement between the agencies involved in the two states.

To be in compliance with the IEP regulations, the public agency must 1) provide an appropriate placement for each handicapped student based on the decisions of a multidisciplinary team and their nondiscriminatory evaluation data, 2) ensure that a team of professionals and parents write an IEP before each handicapped student is placed, 3) monitor the progress of the student, and 4) review the IEP with parental participation at least annually and make revisions when appropriate.

The IEP is not a legally binding contract and the regulations contain a straightforward protective clause to safeguard the agency and its personnel when projected goals and objectives are not accomplished. Educators are expected to attempt in good faith to assist students in achieving the projected goals and parents are guaranteed the right to a due process hearing if they feel a serious effort is not being made.

> Each public agency must provide special education and related services to a handicapped child in accordance with an individualized education program. However, Part B of the Act does not require that any agency, teacher, or other person be held accountable if a child does not achieve the growth projected in the annual goals and objectives.
>
> Comment. This section is intended to relieve concerns that the individualized education program constitutes a guarantee by the public agency and the teacher that a child will progress at a specified rate. However, this section does not relieve agencies and teachers from making good faith efforts to assist the child in achieving the objectives and goals listed in the individualized education program. Further, the section does not limit a parent's right to complain and ask for revisions of the child's program, or to invoke due process procedures, if the parent feels that efforts are not being made.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.349)

The SEA has a legal and ethical responsibility to help prepare teachers to educate the handicapped, including the development of such skills as writing IEP objectives. The SEA is required under P. L. 94-142 to write an annual program plan which includes a description of programs for the development and implementation of a comprehensive system for personnel development. This means that the SEA must annually assess needs of personnel involved with educating handicapped learners, provide inservice training for those personnel, insure that all personnel so involved are qualified to provide special and related services, and disseminate relevant information to teachers and administrators of programs for handicapped children.

> Each annual program plan must provide that the State educational agency insures that ongoing inservice training programs are available to all personnel who are engaged in the education of handicapped children, and that these programs include:
>
> (1) The use of incentives which insure participation by teachers (such as released time, payment for participation, options for academic credit, salary step credit, certification renewal, or updating professional skills);
>
> (2) The involvement of local staff; and
>
> (3) The use of innovative practices which have been found to be effective.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.382(e))

Activities

1. *Some class members might want to call or write the State Department of Public Instruction to find out more about the SEA's annual program plan or Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD), the incentives used by the SEA to involve local staff in inservice training programs, and innovative practices that are being shared.*
2. *In order to make reasonable referrals, readers might want to learn the characteristics of various handicapping conditions. The National Institute of Health publishes a series of pamphlets called "Hope through Research" which introduce a variety of exceptionalities. Try to match the handicapping conditions on the next page with their definitions, then write the National Institute of Health, Bethesda, Maryland 20014, if you wish more information.*

Referral of Students to the School Based Committee

The IEP process begins after a child is referred to a group of individuals responsible for making educational decisions about students and that child is determined to be handicapped. The regulations describe two groups who bear this responsibility: the multidisciplinary evaluation team and the IEP team, both of which are usually encompassed by a standing school based committee.

The school based committee is referred to by various names, such as the screening team, multidisciplinary team, special services committee, child study team, or placement team. Regardless of the rubric attached, the committee serves vital coordination and communication functions among classroom teachers, special educators, students, administrators, counselors, parents, evaluators and other support personnel. The committee should have permanent and temporary members and should schedule regular meeting times,

Quiz Yourself . . .

by Karen Nery

A. arthritis
B. hyperactivity
C. scoliosis
D. diabetes
E. dyslexia
F. acalculia
G. cretenism
H. asthma

I. mental retardation
J. gifted
K. catatonia
L. cystic fibrosis
M. multihandicapped
N. Down's syndrome
O. orthopedic handicap
P. hemophilia

Q. autism
R. aphasia
S. cerebral palsy
T. cleft lip
U. hydrocephalus
V. spina bifida
W. muscular dystrophy
X. epilepsy

____ 1. An individual who possesses unusually high ability.
____ 2. Having a physical or sensory handicap plus one or more additional handicaps.
____ 3. A serious hereditary disorder in which the blood fails to clot.
____ 4. A condition affecting the joints and muscles, causing pain, stiffness, and inflamation.
____ 5. Abnormal concentration of sugar in the blood and urine.
____ 6. A disorder of the central nervous system, characterized by sudden periodic lapses of consciousness.
____ 7. A split or opening in the upper lip.
____ 8. A labored wheezing breathing.
____ 9. Behavior characterized by abnormal, excessive activity or movement.
____ 10. Condition which results in impaired reading ability.
____ 11. Significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning manifested during the developmental period, concurrently with impaired adaptive behavior.
____ 12. Congenital defect marked by chromosomal abnormality, mental retardation, and usually some degree of physical deformity.
____ 13. A severe disorder of communication and behavior beginning in children, also called infantile schizophrenia.
____ 14. A disabling condition caused by physical impairments.
____ 15. A non-progressive disorder of movement or coordination caused by cerebral defect or injury.
____ 16. A congenital cleft of the spine which often allows protrusion of the spinal cord.
____ 17. A lateral or side to side curvature of the spine in the shape of an elongated letter S.
____ 18. A form of mental illness characterized by a trance-like stupor.
____ 19. Abnormal condition in which there is excess fluid in or around the brain causing enlargement of the head.
____ 20. Inability to do simple arithmetic calculations.
____ 21. Inability to produce or comprehend language.
____ 22. Mental retardation resulting from a thyroid deficiency characterized by thick, dry skin, roundness of face, hoarseness of voice, listlessness, and dullness.
____ 23. A disease affecting most mucous glands in the body, causing bodily secretions to become sticky, obstructing body functions and causing a deterioration of body organs.
____ 24. A hereditary disorder that causes a loss of vitality and progressive deterioration of the body.

Answers: 1. J, 2. M, 3. P, 4. A, 5. D, 6. X, 7. T, 8. H, 9. B, 10. E, 11. I, 12. N, 13. Q, 14. O, 15. S, 16. V, 17. C, 18. K, 19. U, 20. F, 21. R, 22. G, 23. L, 24. W.

probably semimonthly, depending upon the size of the school's student population.

The permanent members should include someone knowledgeable about the suspected disabilities (e.g., the special education teacher or supervisor), someone who can interpret evaluation data (e.g., a school psychologist or licensed evaluator), and someone familiar with placement options (e.g., the counselor and principal). In addition temporary members should serve on the committee as the need arises. These members might include a representative from the IEP team when these members have been appointed, the student's teachers, therapists, an interpreter, or the person who referred the student.

Responsibilities of the committee should be shared by individuals to expedite the process and help meetings run smoothly and efficiently. A possible delegation of tasks is described in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Responsibilities of the School Based Committee

Member	Responsibility
Counselor	Chairperson; communicates with parents and students.
Administrator	Accepts referrals and presents them at meetings; records minutes.
Evaluator(s)	Evaluates the student and interprets data.
Supervisor	Communicates with community agencies and others to gather additional data when needed.
Special Educator	Communicates with classroom teachers to gather additional data when needed; sometimes evaluates the student and interprets data; serves as liaison to the IEP team (either an administrator, counselor, or supervisor must also serve on the IEP team; the evaluator must serve on the IEP team when the student is initially placed); provides appropriate feedback to the referrer.
Temporary Members	Situation specific.

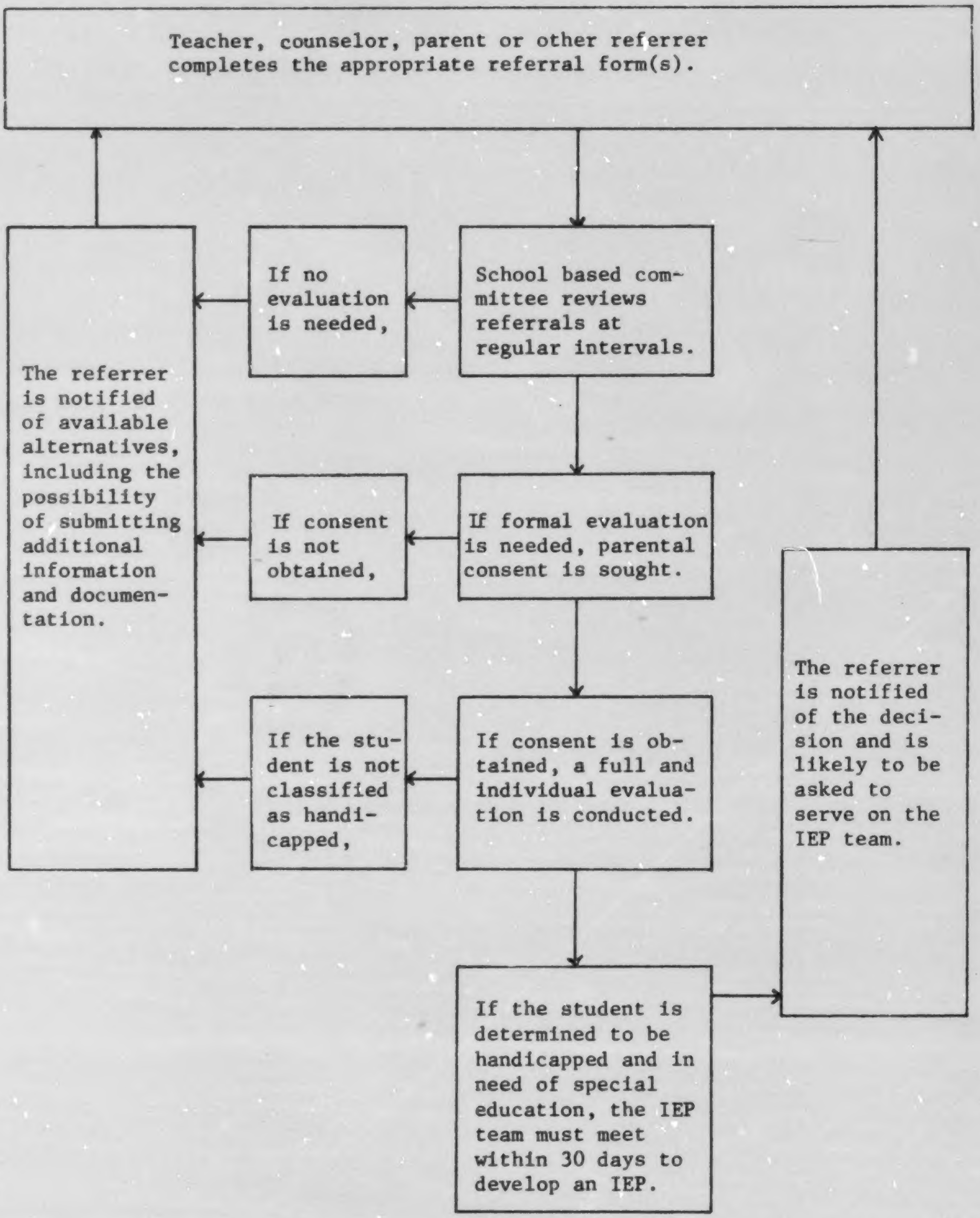
The school based committee chairperson might be in a good position to offer guidance to the team and to help coordinate the roles of team members. The special education supervisor could provide skill hierarchies, behavior checklists (social-emotional, academic, and psycho-motor behaviors), competency lists, and alternative curricula to aid teachers in writing IEP objectives. The supervisor and administrator could be instrumental in implementing the IEP by providing support for the special education staff and encouragement for special/classroom teacher communications.

A referral might be made to this team by anyone (e.g., parent, teacher, counselor) who is familiar with a student's special needs and desires a formal evaluation of the student. The team should encourage teachers to use this option when it is appropriate, by providing straightforward referral forms and an outline of the team's process so the person initiating the referral will know when to expect feedback about the referral and will be kept informed about the team's progress. The more expeditious the process, the sooner the student will receive appropriate services. A sample flowchart of possible procedures for the school based committee is found in Figure 2.

In this flowchart the referrer (typically a teacher) has three avenues for receiving information from the committee: 1) the school based committee reviews the referral and determines that more information is needed to justify evaluating the student or offers suggestions for alternative means of dealing with the problem; 2) the referral is determined to warrant formal investigation, the evaluators conduct an individual evaluation, the committee decides not to classify the student as handicapped, and the referrer is notified of the available alternatives as soon as possible; or 3) after the referral, evaluation, and determination that the student is handicapped, an IEP is developed and the referrer is probably requested to serve on the

Figure 2

Flow of Information for Initial Referrals


Teacher, counselor, parent or other referrer completes the appropriate referral form(s).
School based committee reviews referrals at regular intervals.
If no evaluation is needed,
The referrer is notified of available alternatives, including the possibility of submitting additional information and documentation.
If formal evaluation is needed, parental consent is sought.
If consent is not obtained,
If consent is obtained, a full and individual evaluation is conducted.
If the student is not classified as handicapped,
If the student is determined to be handicapped and in need of special education, the IEP team must meet within 30 days to develop an IEP.
The referrer is notified of the decision and is likely to be asked to serve on the IEP team.

IEP team. This team must meet within 30 days of the determination that the student needs special education and related services, and the IEP must be completed before special services begin.

The referral form should be based upon information that is readily available to classroom teachers and should require minimal time for collecting records and background data. The referral process must not be the hurdle that discourages teachers from referring students in need of help; however, teachers should not be encouraged to refer every problem student without first taking steps to ameliorate the adverse situation.

Careful screening for evaluation is needed to minimize the number of students who are formally evaluated and subsequently determined to have no handicap. This screening process will help reduce the numbers of students who are waiting to be evaluated. This waiting list can get very long, especially when too many students are referred without proper screening.

One way to expedite the referral process while incorporating screening devices is to use a well-constructed referral form that is easily completed and clearly delineates the steps the referrer has taken to resolve the problem. The sample referral form in Figure 3, which can be used at any grade level, could quickly be completed; however, the last section asks what the referrer has done to deal with the situation, implying that several steps have been taken to help the student. Depending upon the situation, resources available, and type of referral, some schools might require a minimum number of actions by the referrer as a screening device or specific actions may be deemed requisite to formal evaluation. Additional information (see Figure 4) may be required for referral of younger children.

When the referral is made, the school based committee must decide whether further evaluation is necessary. If so, they must give parents notice of their intentions. Some states also require parental notification

Figure 3

Request for Evaluation Services--Part One
Referral Form for Grades K-12

Referred By:________________________ Position: ______________ Date:______

Relationship with Student:____

Student's Name:______________________ D.O.B.:______________ Age: __________

Grade in School:___________ Course Grades this Year:______________________

Parents/Guardians:______________________________________ Phone:__________

Address:____

Reason for Referral:____

____

____

____

Problem Area(s): ☐ Academic ☐ Social-Emotional Behavior ☐ Physical
☐ Speech/Language ☐ Vision ☐ Motor ☐ Medical/Health ☐ Perceptual
☐ Hearing ☐ Other ____

What has been the nature of parental involvement in dealing with this situation?____

____

What actions have been taken to deal with this situation? ☐ Low Grades
☐ Tutor ☐ Special Help Sessions ☐ Special Testing ________________
☐ Parents Called ☐ Special Books/Materials ☐ Conference with Student
☐ Time-out ☐ Detention ☐ Reported to Guidance ☐ Reported to Office
☐ Conference with Parents ☐ Special Professional Help ________________
☐ Other/Comments ____

____

____

____

Figure 4

Request for Evaluation Services--Part two
Referral Form for Grades K-4

Student's Name: ______________________ Referred By: ______________________

Directions: The following checklists are designed to help structure your thinking about the academic, motoric, and social/emotional development of the student you are referring. This information will be valuable to the team who will decide whether the student needs further evaluation and will help build your case. It was decided that you are in the best situation to observe the child to obtain this information; therefore, you are asked to check all areas of concern that apply to the student referred.

Academic Achievement

___ Reading (present level_______)
___ Reading comprehension
___ Word attack skills
___ Reading speed
___ Grammar
___ Alphabet
___ Vocabulary
___ Spelling
___ Verbal Skills
___ Listening
___ Writing Skills

___ Arithmetic (present level _________)
___ Number concepts
___ Counting
___ Arithmetic symbols
___ Computation (Circle: + - x ÷)
___ Telling time
___ Fractional numbers
___ Concept of monetary values
___ Word problems
___ Geometric concepts
___ Measurement

Gross Motor Skills

___ Nonambulatory
___ Ambulatory with aides
___ Lacks coordination
___ Hopping
___ Skipping
___ Ball throwing skills
___ Ball catching skills

Fine Motor Skills

___ Cannot cut with scissors
___ Cannot trace objects
___ Cannot color within lines
___ Manipulation of small objects
___ Handwriting
___ Copying skills
___ Drawing ability

Social-Emotional Behavior

___ Introverted, shy, withdrawn
___ Dependent upon adults
___ Cannot work independently
___ Lethargic
___ Lack of motivation
___ Signs of anxiety
___ Easily confused or upset
___ Low self-concept
___ Age-inappropriate behavior
___ Lacks self-control

___ Aggressive, acting out
___ Poor peer relationships
___ Cannot work in a group
___ Overactive
___ Short attention span
___ Distractability
___ Demands attention
___ Poor relationships with adults
___ Poor memory
___ Poor self-help skills

when the referral is made, but this is not a federal requirement.

> Notice. Written notice which meets the requirements under Sec. 300.505 must be given to the parents of a handicapped child a reasonable time before the public agency:
>
> (1) Proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a child or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the child, or
>
> (2) Refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the child.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.504(a))

There are three occasions when the parents must be given prior notice--two listed above and for the IEP team meeting, to be discussed in a later section. The content of such notices is detailed in the regulations (Sec. 300.345 and Sec. 300.505). Basically, the notice must explain all procedural safeguards available to parents and describe the agency's proposed actions, rationale for the action, and evaluation procedures. Notices and requests for consent might be alarming or confusing to some parents; therefore, the agency should be sensitive to this possibility and plan conferences or phone conversations with parents as needed.

Activities

1. *If you are currently teaching, try making a mock referral for a student with whom you have been experiencing some difficulty. Discuss with others the following issues: a) what screening devices or corrective/remedial methods had you used prior to the formal referral? b) does everyone agree that you had done everything that should be expected of a teacher to try to deal with the situation? c) what do you feel would be the decision of the school based committee about this student? d) when would you expect to receive feedback from this referral? e) how might you assert*

your right for feedback from the committee within a reasonable time period?

2. Look at the list of famous people below and see if you would have referred them if they had been in your class. These are people of great ability, each of whom also has a disability. Can you match the people with their disabilities? This quiz was taken in part from the November, 1981, DSS-PATCH, Disabled Student News, volume 2, California State University, Chico, California.

___ 1. Franklin D. Roosevelt
___ 2. Beethoven
___ 3. Nelson Rockefeller
___ 4. Stevie Wonder
___ 5. Jim Nabors
___ 6. Tony Orlando
___ 7. Lew Ferrigno, "The Hulk"
___ 8. Patricia Neal
___ 9. Mary Tyler Moore
___ 10. Pablo Casals (cellist)
___ 11. Rosalind Russell
___ 12. Ray Charles
___ 13. Herve Villechaize, "Tatoo"
___ 14. Joseph Pulitzer
___ 15. Theodore Roosevelt
___ 16. Ido McKinley (wife of President William McKinley)
___ 17. Thomas A. Edison
___ 18. Albert Einstein
___ 19. John East
___ 20. José Felicianno
___ 21. Al Capp
___ 22. James Thurber
___ 23. Ellen Glasgow (authoress)
___ 24. Itzhak Perlman (violinist)
___ 25. Fanny Crosby (hymn writer)

a. Learning Disability
b. Visually Impaired
c. Wheelchair Bound
d. Hearing Impaired
e. Mental Disability
f. Mobility Impaired
g. Stroke
h. Severe Asthma
i. Arthritis
j. Diabetes
k. Dwarf
l. Epilepsy
m. Emotional Disorders

ANSWERS:

1. f, c 2. d 3. a 4. b 5. h 6. e 7. d 8. g 9. j 10. i 11. i
12. b 13. k 14. b 15. h, b 16. l 17. d 18. a 19. c, f 20. b
21. f 22. b 23. m, d 24. f 25. b

The Multidisciplinary Approach to Evaluation

The multidisciplinary evaluation team has responsibility for conducting and interpreting the assessment of the student. Just as no single individual may make educational decisions for the student, no single procedure may be used as the sole criterion for making those decisions. The evaluation team must

> Draw upon information from a variety of sources, including aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social or cultural background, and adaptive behavior. . .
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.533(a)(1))
>
> Comment. Paragraph (a)(1) includes a list of examples of sources that may be used by a public agency in making placement decisions. The agency would not have to use all the sources in every instance. The point of the requirement is to insure that more than one source is used in interpreting evaluation data and making placement decisions.

Parents must be notified before the evaluation or, if the student is being referred for the first time, parental consent to conduct the preplacement evaluation is required. There are only two occasions that require parental consent.

> Consent. (1) Parental consent must be obtained before:
>
> (i) Conducting a preplacement evaluation; and
>
> (ii) Initial placement of a handicapped child in a program providing special education and related services.
>
> (2) Except for preplacement evaluation and initial placement, consent may not be required as a condition of any benefit to the parent or child.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.504(b))

At this time, a parental conference for clarifying the school's intentions and for assuaging anxieties might also be beneficial. If consent is not granted, state procedures govern the public agency in overriding the parent's refusal; if there is not state law governing this issue, the agency may initiate due process hearing procedures as described in the regulations (Sec. 300.506-Sec. 300.513).

If the parents do agree to the preplacement evaluation, the regulations specify the procedures (Sec. 300.530-Sec. 300.532). A paraphrase of these procedures follows: 1) a full and individual evaluation of the student's educational needs must be conducted before initial placement of a handicapped youngster in a special education program; 2) testing and evaluation materials are selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory; 3) the evaluation is administered in the student's native language or other mode of communication; 4) tests are validated for the purpose used and administered by trained personnel; 5) the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude, achievement level, or whatever the test purports to measure; 6) no single procedure is used as the sole criterion for making decisions about the student; 7) the student is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability; and 8) the evaluation is made by a multidisciplinary group of persons, including at least one teacher or other specialist with knowledge of the suspected handicap.

Special education teachers may have minimal input into the evaluation procedure or may be responsible for most of the testing. Classroom teachers might offer valuable evaluation data to the multidisciplinary team, including recommendations based upon observations, anecdotal records, teacher-made and standardized tests. The evaluation battery should include testing for aptitude, achievement, and adaptive behavior, plus other specialized testing in areas related to the suspected disability. The evaluation data as interpreted by the multidisciplinary team will be used by the school based committee and IEP team to make programmatic and placement decisions about the student who was referred. The data may help to determine that the student is not handicapped, in which case information and alternatives should be related to the referrer as soon as possible. Classroom performance data should be brought to the school based committee meeting and presented as a valuable part of the multidisciplinary evaluation. Teachers should assert their right to this input and to prompt feedback from referrals.

Activities

1. *Sally is a fourth grader with a specific learning problem manifested in the inability to read. A paper-and-pencil test (which she could not read) determined that her intelligence was considerably below average; therefore, she was inappropriately placed in a class for educable mentally retarded students. What are other examples of how certain tests might unfairly discriminate against handicapped students?*
2. *If you would like to see a test that was taken from the Black experience and intended to be culturally biased, get a copy of the Black Intelligence Test of Cultural Homogeneity from your school's standardized test library or write to the author Dr. Robert L. Williams, R. Williams & Assoc., 6372 Delmar Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63130. This is an example of one way in which tests can unfairly discriminate against students.*

The IEP Team Meeting

At the beginning of each academic year, the public agency must have an IEP in effect for every handicapped student served by the agency.

> Each public agency is responsible for initiating and conducting meetings for the purpose of developing, reviewing, and revising a handicapped child's individualized education program.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec300.343(a))

Timelines. After the school-based committee determines that a student is handicapped, it must give either written or oral notice to the parents of the impending IEP meeting and solicit their attendance. Parents should also be informed of the student's right to attend the meeting. The notice they are sent must indicate the purpose, time, and location of the meeting, and who will be in attendance.

To ensure that there will be no significant delay between the time newly referred students are evaluated and the time when they begin to receive special education, an IEP meeting. . .

> . . .must be held within thirty calendar days of a determination that the child needs special education and related services.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.343(c))

The IEP cannot always be completed in one meeting of the IEP team; however, an efficient process is essential since the IEP must be completed before special education and related services can be provided for the student. According to the IEP Interpretation,

> The appropriate placement for a given handicapped child cannot be determined until after decisions have been made about what the child's needs are and what will be provided. Since these decisions are made at the IEP meeting, it would not be permissible to first place the child and then develop the IEP. Therefore, the IEP must be developed before placement.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5464)

If the IEP process is not completed at the initial meeting, the team leader should plan the follow-up meeting while the team members are still assembled.

It is expected that a handicapped student's IEP will be implemented as soon as possible, generally with no delay, following the IEP meeting. Two exceptions are noted:

> (1) when the meetings occur during the summer or a vacation period, or (2) where there are circumstances which require a short delay (e.g., working out transportation arrangements). However, there can be no undue delay in providing special education and related services to the child.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.342 Comment)

After the initial placement of a student, an IEP must be in effect at the beginning of every school year. According to the IEP Interpretation, this means that the IEP

> (1) has been developed properly (i.e. at a meeting(s) involving all of the participants specified in the Act. . .;
>
> (2) is regarded by both parents and agency as appropriate in terms of the child's needs, specified goals and objectives, and the services to be provided; and
>
> (3) will be implemented as written.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5464)

After the IEP is implemented, the most likely person to initiate an IEP meeting is the teacher--special educator or classroom teacher--but a meeting may also be requested by the student's parents. Parents have the right to ask for a review of the child's progress, to ask for revisions in the IEP, and to invoke due process procedures if they feel a good faith effort is not being made to achieve the goals specified in the IEP.

The statute requires agencies to hold a meeting at least once each year to review the IEP and revise it if necessary. The timing of these meetings is left to the discretion of the agency, as long as the IEP is in effect at the beginning of each school year.

> Review. Each public agency shall initiate and conduct meetings to periodically review each child's individualized education program and if appropriate revise its provisions. A meeting must be held for this purpose at least once a year.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.343(d))

Since the IEP must be in effect at the beginning of the school year, the meeting might best be held at the end of each year or in the summer. This would allow the special educator to begin services at the beginning of the school year without the delay of extra paperwork and meetings to plan.

Activities. *Strict adherence to timelines is critical to the expeditious implementation of the IEP. However, speed of service delivery should not detract from the quality of the educational program which is developed. Discuss possible situations in which compliance with the IEP requirement (or "the letter of the law") might not result in a product which is useful to the implementers of IEPs and beneficial to students ("the spirit of the law").*

Composition of the team. The 1977 regulations list the following as the required participants in the IEP meeting:

> (1) A representative of the public agency, other than the child's teacher, who is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, special education.
> (2) The child's teacher.
> (3) One or both of the child's parents, subject to Sec. 300.345.
> (4) The child, where appropriate.
> (5) Other individuals at the discretion of the parent or agency.
>
> (Sec. 300.344(a))

P. L. 94-142 encourages the theory that parents should be actively involved in planning their children's education; therefore, the IEP team brings together specialists, generalists, and laypersons to address the unique needs of the student. There is considerable flexibility in choosing appropriate team members; however, the IEP Interpretation offers some guidelines:

> The "representative of the public agency" could be any member of the school staff, other than the child's teacher, who is "qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of handicapped children."
>
> Each State or local agency may determine which specific staff member will serve as the agency representative. However, the representative should be able to ensure that whatever services are set out in the IEP will actually be provided and that the IEP will not be vetoed at a higher administrative level within the agency.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5466)

The public agency representative or special education teacher is most likely to be the IEP team leader. With regard to the critical time factor involved in the bureaucracy of educating handicapped students, local and state administrators play significant roles. At the building level, administrators and IEP team leaders should help the teachers involved use their IEP team meeting time efficiently so that the process becomes a facilitator of service delivery rather than a hindrance or waste of time. Providing good leadership, lucid job descriptions for special educators and others involved in the IEP process, positive and supportive attitudes, released time for added duties, and inservice help for writing IEPs are all essential functions of the principal.

The student's teacher, as an IEP team member, is usually the person with primary responsibility for implementing the IEP. If the student has only one teacher, this person would serve on the team and another agency representative would also be needed as a team member. At the elementary school level, the student's classroom teacher and special education teacher are likely to serve as the teacher representatives. At the secondary level, if the student has several classroom teachers, only one must attend. More may attend at the option of the LEA, but meetings work best that are not too large. Teachers that are implicated by the IEP should be allowed to at least provide input for the meeting and should be informed about the IEP or given a copy. For students in both special and regular classes, the IEP Interpretation suggests the following:

> In general, the teacher at the IEP meeting should be the child's special education teacher. At the option of the agency or the parent, the child's regular teacher might also attend. If the regular teacher does not attend, the agency should either provide the regular teacher with a copy of the IEP or inform the regular teacher of its contents. Moreover, the agency should insure that the special education teacher, or other appropriate support person, is able, where necessary, to consult with and be a resource to the child's regular teacher.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5466)

For a student who has recently been identified as handicapped and is receiving special education for the first time, the teacher representative could be the classroom or special teacher; however, at least one team member must be qualified in the area of the student's disability.

"Parent" is defined in the 1977 regulations (Sec. 300.514) as a legal parent, a guardian, a person acting as a parent with whom the youngster lives and who is legally responsible for the child, or a surrogate parent. A person is appointed to represent the child's educational interests when he is a ward of the state. The regulations make no modification of parents' rights when their children reach the age of majority. The regulations strongly encourage parent participation in the IEP meeting:

> Each public agency shall take steps to insure that one or both of the parents of the handicapped child are present at each meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate, including:
>
> (1) Notifying parents of the meeting early enough to insure that they will have an opportunity to attend; and
>
> (2) Scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed upon time and place.
>
> (Sec. 300.345 (a))

If neither parent can attend, the agency must try other methods such as telephone conferences. If it is impossible to obtain parent participation, attempts to arrange a mutually agreed upon meeting time and place, such as through telephone calls, correspondence, or home visits, must be documented. If students are to attend the meeting, they should be prepared in advance for their involvement.

> Generally, a handicapped child should attend the IEP meeting whenever the parent decides that it is appropriate for the child to do so. Whenever possible, the agency and parents should discuss the appropriateness of the child's participation before a decision is made, in order to help the parents determine whether or not the child's attendance will be (1) helpful in developing the IEP and/or (2) directly beneficial to the child.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5467)

The agency might select a coordinator or case manager to coordinate the evaluation procedures, multidisciplinary team, parental participation, and IEP process. This special educator, counselor, or other school staff member may conduct the IEP meeting. Parents may request the presence of a friend, doctor, therapist, or other advocate who would be helpful in developing the IEP. Although it is not required that related services personnel attend IEP meetings, the IEP Interpretation suggests the following for a handicapped student identified as needing specific related services:

> . . .the agency should ensure that a qualified provider of that service either (1) attends the IEP meeting, or (2) provides a written recommendation concerning the nature, frequency, and amount of service to be provided to the child.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5467)

For students who have been identified as handicapped for the first time, additional members might be needed, such as a speech pathologist for a student whose primary handicap is a speech impairment.

> Evaluation personnel. For a handicapped child who has been evaluated for the first time, the public agency shall insure:
>
> (1) That a member of the evaluation team participates in the meeting; or
>
> (2) That the representative of the public agency, the child's teacher, or some other person is present at the meeting, who is knowledgeable about the evaluation procedures used with the child and is familiar with the results of the evaluation.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.344 (b))

There are others who are not permitted to attend the IEP meeting. Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and according to the IEP Interpretation,

> . . .officials of teacher organizations may not attend IEP meetings at which personally identifiable information from the student's education records may be discussed--except with the prior written consent of the parents.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5467)

Activities. *1. At the secondary level, involving the student's classroom teachers in the IEP meeting may mean involving a large number of people. What are the advantages of participation in the IEP development by all teachers who will be involved with implementing the IEP? What are the disadvantages of a large IEP team? How might some of these problems be resolved and still allow input from classroom teachers?*

2. Jimmy is a mildly handicapped ninth grader who has been classified as educable mentally handicapped by the multidisciplinary evaluation team. Nancy is a more moderately retarded third grader, classified as trainable mentally handicapped. Charley is an eleventh grader who has a specific learning disability. Ed is a hearing impaired first grader and Carolyn is a blind senior in high school. Which of these handicapped students would most likely be encouraged to participate as IEP team members to help plan their own educational programs? What factors would help determine the appropriateness of student participation at the IEP meeting? What actions might enhance the appropriateness of such participation?

Functions of the IEP team. The group's functions include developing the IEP, determining specific placement of the student (percentage of time in regular and special programs), specifying the necessary related services needed by the student, and establishing monitoring procedures for the implementation and revision of the IEP. The leader of the team or case manager should ascertain that all members understand their roles and responsibilities.

The teacher(s) should come to the meeting prepared with ideas for the goals of the IEP based upon data about the student, with possibly a working draft of the IEP already prepared or a model for writing the IEP. The evaluator(s), for students new in the program, should be prepared to explain the evaluation data to the other team members. Student participants may be in a position to relate their own needs, problems and potential to the groups, and, therefore, may be active participants. The public agency representative should discuss placement options and resources available to accommodate the student's needs. The parents also have the responsibility and right to participate actively. It is critical that the team leader encourage parental input through conscious efforts to set a tone for open communications.

> When participating as an active member of the IEP committee, the parent can provide information to other committee members that will lead to a better understanding of the student's unique needs and to appropriate program planning. Such participation can, in addition, help provide assurance that the parent clearly understands the function of the committee. Parental involvement in the early stages of IEP development will usually result in a greater degree of cooperation when the IEP is approved and implemented. (Turnbull, Strickland & Brantly, 1978, p. 129)

Parents must give written consent before the initial placement of the student in special education. Parental consent for the placement can be obtained at the IEP meeting.

To interpret evaluation data and to determine appropriate placement, the public agency shall

> . . .Insure that the placement decision is made by a group of persons, including persons knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options. . .
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.533(a)(3))

Placement options should not be limited to either a self-contained special class or to fulltime placement in regular classes. Rather, the IEP team should be given alternatives so they can choose the most appropriate placement for the student which will best enhance the student's educational program.

> Each public agency shall insure that a continuum of alternative placements is available to meet the needs of handicapped children for special education and related services.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.551 (a))

This continuum must include regular and special classes with resource and itinerant help available, special schools and institutions, and home instruction.

The preference, however, is the regular class when that placement is appropriate.

> Each public agency shall insure:
>
> (1) That to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not handicapped, and
>
> (2) That special classes, separate schooling or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.
>
> (1977 Regulations, Sec. 300.550 (b))

All related services required for the student to benefit from special education must be listed in the IEP whether they are provided directly by the agency's own staff or indirectly through contact with another agency or other arrangement. Any modifications to the regular education program necessary to insure the student's participation in that program must also be described in the IEP, e.g., supplementary aids to accommodate physical impairments, modifications in the physical education program, special vocational education or laboratory adaptations.

Activities. Below are two brief fictitious case studies for an elementary school girl who has been referred for an initial preplacement evaluation and for a high school boy whose IEP is being reviewed and a new annual plan is being written. For each student, discuss the following questions:

1. If you were referring this student what prior actions might you have taken to help the student?

2. What are the student's strengths and weaknesses? What do you know so far about the student's current level of educational performance?

3. How will the emphases of the two IEPs differ? the lengths?

CASE STUDY ONE:

Mary B. is a sixth grader at Traceland Elementary who has been referred to the school based committee by her teacher, Mr. Black, because of the severe difficulty she experiences in spelling. She has been tested by the multidisciplinary evaluation team and has been determined to have a specific learning disability, with spelling achievement below the third grade level. She is of average intelligence and learns best through the auditory mode. Mary will need special help in spelling in order to succeed in her weakest subject, language arts. Her best subject is math. She is eager to learn and cooperative with her teachers.

CASE STUDY TWO:

Kelly R. is an educable mentally handicapped tenth grader who was referred to the school based committee by the school counselor when he was in elementary school. He has received special services for four years and was reevaluated last year. Although Kelly is over three years below grade expectancy in math achievement, this is his best subject. He is weakest in reading and spelling which cause difficulty in all of his core subject areas. He learns best through the visual mode. Kelly can present behavioral problems as he is frustrated easily and still fairly immature. Kelly will need help in all of his academic courses and in his vocational classes in order to succeed in the regular program.

The Contents of the IEP

The regulations specify the basic contents for all IEPs.

> The individualized education program for each child must include:
>
> (a) A statement of the child's present levels of educational performance;
>
> (b) A statement of annual goals, including short term instructional objectives;
>
> (c) A statement of the specific special education and related services to be provided to the child, and the extent to which the child will be able to participate in regular education programs;
>
> (d) The projected dates for initiation of services and the anticipated duration of the services; and
>
> (e) Appropriate objectives criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short term instructional objectives are being achieved.
>
> (Sec. 300.346)

Present performance levels. The child's present levels of educational performance will be based primarily upon the multidisciplinary evaluation data and input from teachers and parents. The relevant results of the standardized and informal evaluation measures used by the multidisciplinary evaluation team should be included in this section in terms that are understandable to teachers, parents and students. The comments by teachers and parents based upon their observations and experiences with the child may be written in terms of strengths and weaknesses or environmental influences. Environmental forces that may be listed include those that are supportive, constraining, motivating, and frustrating to the student. The student could have valuable input into this section by listing his likes and dislikes, hobbies and interests.

This section is particularly useful at the elementary school level, where students are learning basic academic skills, often in well-defined hierarchies, and basic living skills that can often be developmentally ordered. The performance levels provide baseline data from which goals and objectives can be determined. These goals will address the special education to be provided the child; therefore, the levels listed should be those areas of educational performance that relate to the subject areas which require adaptation of the special services to be provided. These subject areas and services may include academic achievement (e.g. reading, spelling, arithmetic or science), aptitude, adaptive behavior, prevocational and vocational skills, or psychomotor development, but is not necessarily limited to nor inclusive of these areas.

For example, the IEP for a mentally retarded individual is likely to require all of the components mentioned above. A learning disabled individual may require only one area of academic achievement to be listed in this section and, perhaps, prevocational skills and perceptual development. On the other hand, a student whose primary disability is a severe articulation problem may require an IEP only in the areas of articulation and conversational speech.

The IEP Interpretation suggests the following guidelines for stating current levels of performance.

> The statement of present levels of educational performance will be different for each handicapped child. Thus determinations about the content of the statement for an individual child are matters that are left to the discretion of participants in the IEP meetings. However, the following are some points which should be taken into account in writing this part of the IEP.
>
> a. The statement should accurately describe the effect of the child's handicap on the child's performance in any area of education that is affected, including (1) academic areas (reading, math, communication, etc.) and (2) non-academic areas (daily life activities, mobility, etc.). (NOTE--Labels such as "mentally retarded" or "deaf" could not be used as a substitute for the description of present levels of educational performance.)
>
> b. The statement should be written in objective measurable terms, to the extent possible. Data from the child's evaluation would be a good source of such information. Test scores that are pertinent to the child's diagnosis might be included, where appropriate. However, the scores should be (1) self-explanatory (i.e., they can be interpreted by all participants without the use of test manuals or any other aids), or (2) an explanation should be included. Whatever test results are used should reflect the impact of the handicap on the child's performance. Thus, raw scores would not usually be sufficient.
>
> c. There should be a direct relationship between the present levels of educational performance and the other components of the IEP. Thus, if the statement describes a problem with the child's reading level and points to a deficiency in a specific reading skill, this problem should be addressed under both (1) goals and objectives, and (2) specific special education and related services to be provided to the child.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5470)

Activities. Select a handicapped student with whom you are familiar or use one of the evaluation reports provided and determine the student's weakest areas of functioning. Use any IEP form, refer to the one on pages 61-63, or simply list performance levels in problem areas.

CASE STUDY ONE--MARY'S TEST RESULTS:

Intelligence test scores--Verbal 105, Performance 88, Full scale 97
Social maturity--Age equivalent 10-4, Chronological age 12-1
Visual-motor information--Age equivalent 9-7
Achievement scores--Math 5.9, Spelling 2.8, Reference 5.2, Language arts 4.8, Reading 5.4, Total 4.1 (Grade equivalents)
Modality preference--Auditory mode

CASE STUDY TWO--KELLY'S TEST RESULTS:

Intelligence test scores--Verbal 68, Performance 72, Full scale 70
Social maturity--Age equivalent 12-8, Chronological age 16-4
Achievement scores--Math 6.7, Word recognition 4.4, Reading comprehension 4.0, Spelling 4.8, Total 5.0 (Grade equivalents)
Modality preference--Visual mode

Annual goals. The annual goals and instructional objectives in the IEP provide 1) guidelines for planning daily, weekly, and monthly instruction; 2) a means for determining whether the student is progressing as anticipated; 3) a mechanism for determining whether the placement and services are appropriate to the child's needs; and 4) a degree of protection for the handicapped child and the child's parents. The parents have the right to help determine their child's educational program, to ask for revisions in the IEP, and to have a due process hearing if they feel a good faith effort is not being made to achieve the objectives of the IEP. These rights are not intended to give parents of handicapped students more rights than those parents of nonhandicapped students, but rather to guarantee equal protection and appropriate educational placement/programming for all students. Some parents will not choose to help determine educational goals and objectives for their children, but they retain the guarantee that the school will plan and implement appropriate programs.

The goals should be broad; perhaps one to three general goals should be written for each subject area that requires specially designed instruction. The goals should be reasonable expectations that reflect the student's critical needs, based upon specific evaluation data or levels of performance as written in the previous section. It is important that these performance levels are stated in specific behavioral terms whenever possible.

The goal statement should contain at least two specific parts: 1) the direction of change that is expected (increase, decrease, or maintain) and 2) the subject or behavior that is an area of need requiring special attention. Goals might also include the projected grade or criterion level of performance or the criteria for evaluation might be included in the short term objectives. Some examples of annual goals derived from current functioning levels for an emotionally handicapped second grader are found in Figure 5.

This is a sample of levels/goals for an individual whose IEP might include other subject or behavior areas; however, the IEP need only address those areas that require special instruction or related services. The goals are the IEP team's best predictions of what the child will be able to do by the end of the year. They are important guidelines and are not intended to be precise endpoints nor should they limit a child's program nor should they necessarily be all-inclusive.

Mager (1962) said, "If we don't know where we're going, we might end up someplace else." Few educators resist the need for advanced planning, goal-setting, and intentional rather than accidental learning. Years of research with handicapped and nonhandicapped learners has demonstrated that without

Figure 5

CURRENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS
Social-emotional development:	The student will
Cries daily when left at school by mother.	Decrease crying behavior to no more than a monthly occurrence.
Has no friends as demonstrated by antisocial playground behavior, number of times chosen last for teams, and a sociometric scale.	Increase gregarious playground behavior, positive interpersonal behaviors in class, and number of friends to at least two.
Does not work cooperatively in a group.	Work successfully in groups of two to four.
Demands constant attention.	Raise hand before speaking out in class at least 75% of the time.
Reading:	
Reads at the 1.5 level.	Increase word recognition and comprehension to the 2.7 level.
Has poor word attack skills.	Demonstrate word attack skills commensurate with grade level expectations.
Demonstrates short attention span and poor listening habits.	Increase attention span to the required length for completing a given task. Accurately follow oral directions 90% of the time.

written goals and objectives, instruction tends to be disorganized, inefficient in terms of timing and pacing, difficult to evaluate objectively, and less effective in terms of student learning (Lovitt, 1977; Popham, 1974).

Activities. Using the student you have chosen or one of the case studies, write annual goals which address the levels of functioning you have already listed. Be certain the levels of functioning reflect areas in which the student needs special help based upon the evaluation data. Goals should only be written for the areas in which the student needs special services or adaptations.

Instructional objectives. The linkage between how students function currently and how they are expected to function at the end of the year is the most critical, the most controversial, and potentially the most useful portion of the IEP. This linkage between the child's present performance levels and annual goals is referred to as "short term instructional objectives."

These short term instructional objectives are smaller steps than annual goals but not as detailed as daily, weekly, or even monthly lesson plans. There should be a direct relationship among the child's present levels of functioning, annual goals, instructional objectives, and special education lesson plans (detailed instructional plans). The IEP goals and objectives must be written before the student is placed in a special program and often serve as a foundation for the teacher's lesson plans (the latter are not required by federal regulation).

According to the 1981 IEP Interpretation,

> 1. "Short term instructional objectives" (also called "IEP objectives") are measurable, intermediate steps between a handicapped child's present levels of educational performance and the annual goals that are established for the child. The objectives are developed based on a logical breakdown of the major components of the annual goals, and can serve as milestones for measuring progress toward meeting the goals.

> 2. IEP objectives provide general benchmarks for determining progress toward meeting the annual goals. These objectives should be projected to be accomplished over an extended period of time (e.g., an entire school quarter or semester).
>
> 3. IEP goals and objectives are concerned mainly with meeting a handicapped child's need for special education and related services, and are not required to cover other areas of the child's education. Stated another way, the goals and objectives in the IEP should focus on offsetting or reducing the problems resulting from the child's handicap which interfere with learning and educational performance in school.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5470)

Many publications (see the bibliography section) describe how to write an IEP with heavy emphasis on behaviorally stated instructional objectives, yet much clamor and confusion still surrounds this part of the federal mandate. Aversion to writing IEPs might stem from lack of understanding about the regulations, lack of skill in writing objectives, lack of time for the added paperwork, or lack of clarity about the division of responsibility for writing IEPs. Each of these issues will be addressed below.

The content of the IEP is simply stated in the rules and regulations (Sec. 300.346 (b)): The IEP must include a statement of annual goals, including short term instructional objectives. The Interpretation adds clarity about the amount of detail required: objectives are more specific than annual goals but less specific than detailed lesson plans. Beyond these two guidelines, the primary considerations are that 1) the objectives must be appropriate for the student and 2) they must be useful to the implementers of the IEP. The first consideration determines the content and the second consideration determines the format. The content should relate to the priority needs of the individual student, and the format should relate to the individual IEP implementer. There is no one format prescribed in the regulations and a variety of formats have been described by various authors; however, some state laws require that the objectives be stated behaviorally, i.e., in terms of observable activities.

Behavioral objectives consist of three parts: conditions, performance, and standards or time limits (Mager, 1962). The conditions are circumstances surrounding the performance, such as instructional setting, materials or resources provided. Performance refers to what the child is to do and the standard is the degree of proficiency the child is expected to have in performing the task. An example follows:

Given 10 division problems with one-digit divisors
CONDITION

the learner will write the quotients
PERFORMANCE

with 80% accuracy.
STANDARD

Objectives are usually most useful and easily evaluated if they are stated in behavioral terms. Verbs in an objective that are not easily evaluated include the following: understands, feels, thinks, appreciates, believes, likes, and learns. Action verbs that may be more useful in writing an objective follow: reads, spells, defines, states orally, writes, adds correctly, lists, matches, multiplies by four, interacts, speaks at appropriate times, raises hand, stays in seat, identifies, whispers. Most psycho-motor and academic skills can be behaviorally stated. Some aspects of the affective domain are less conducive to behavioral statement; however, most of these abstract areas are demonstrated through overt behaviors.

Some examples of the relationship among current functioning levels, annual goals, and instructional objectives for an educable mentally retarded fifth grader are found in Figure 6.

Again, this represents only one sample format and style. Remember that only special need areas for the student must be addressed in the IEP and that

Figure 6

CURRENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES
Arithmetic:	The student will	Given needed materials, the student will
Tells time using the hour hand only.	Increase skill in measuring time.	Identify hour and minute hands of a clock and tell time to the nearest quarter hour with 100% accuracy.
Adds single digits.	Perform the basic processes of addition, subtraction and multiplication.	Add and subtract two and three digit numbers using carrying and borrowing with at least 70% accuracy. Multiply orally single digits by 0, 1, 2, 5, 10 with at least 80% accuracy.
Identifies all coins and their values.	Increase monetary understanding and correct use.	Make change using coins and currency up to $20.00 with at least 70% accuracy using actual or play money and in paper-and-pencil computations.
Distinguishes a circle, square, and triangle.	Continue to develop geometric concepts.	Draw 3 triangles and 3 squares accurately and correctly measure their perimeters with 100% accuracy.
Language arts:		
Clear manuscript writing but cursive is illegible.	Improve penmanship.	Write words (including name) legibly in all manuscript writing assignments.
Orders four pictures from a story sequentially.	Increase skills in logical ordering.	Order eight pictures sequentially from increasingly complex stories with 100% accuracy.
Dictates sentence properly for someone else to write down.	Increase sentence writing skills.	Write ten simple sentences using correct subject-verb agreement, conventional upper/lower case letters, and proper end punctuation with at least 80% accuracy.
Does not write in complete sentences using proper capitalization, punctuation, and subject-verb agreement.		

evaluation criteria for the objectives are required. The criteria or standards can be included directly in the goals and objectives but could also be accomplished in a separate section.

For many objectives in the cognitive domain, hierarchies or logical sequences of steps have been published or can be found in the table of contents of some texts. For example, the arithmetic computational skills are logically ordered from addition and subtraction of one, two and more digits through multiplication facts, two and three digit multiplication and division without and then with remainders. The sequence starts with whole numbers and moves through fractions, decimals, and so on. A similar progression is found in the table of contents of most basic arithmetic texts. Hierarchies and sequenced objectives are written for phonic skills, vocabulary, spelling, prevocational skills, and other academic areas, and should be helpful in setting goals and short term objectives. Several references for such guides are listed in Figure 7.

For objectives in the affective or psychomotor domains, precise hierarchies are often unavailable and behavioral sequences may be difficult to determine. One way to think about logical steps toward each goal is through the principle of successive approximation or attempts by gradation toward a goal. For example, a child who talks out of turn ten times during the morning class session may be encouraged to reduce this number of inappropriate behaviors and rewarded when the number drops to eight, and again when the number drops to six and so on. This is successive approximation toward eliminating an undesirable behavior, but the same principle applies when a desired behavior is increased by gradation.

At the state level, divisions for exceptional children in state education agencies can be encouraged to develop statewide alternative curricula for handicapped learners that parallel the regular grade level curricula at all

Figure 7

Selected References for Writing IEP Objectives

Program	Publisher
Basic Math Facts Competency Lab; Beginning Reading Competency Lab; Essential Grammar Competency Lab; Word Attack Competency Lab	Stone's Southern School Supply Co., Inc. 3800 Holly Springs Road Raleigh, NC 27606
Briggance Diagnostic Inventory of Skills; Briggance Diagnostic Inventory of Essential Skills; Briggance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development	Curriculum Associates 6 Henshaw Street Woburn, MA 01801
Diagnosis: An Instructional Aid--Mathematics	SRA 259 East Eric Street Chicago, IL 60611
Elementary Mathematics Diagnosis and Correction Kit By Francis M. Fennell, Ph.D.	Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc. P. O. Box 130 West Nyack, New York 10995
Instructional Based Appraisal System: Objective Cluster Banks	Edmark Associates Box 3903 Bellevue, WA 98009
Sequential Testing and Educational Programming	Academic Therapy 1539 Fourth Street San Rafael, CA 94025
Student Progress Record and Curriculum Guide	Programs for Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Department of Human Resources 2575 Bittern Street Salem, OR 97310

levels. An example is the Competency Goals and Performance Indicators for Educable Mentally Handicapped Learners K-12 developed by the Division for Exceptional Children, North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction. This companion document to the regular scope and sequence will serve teachers as a repository of competencies from which they can select those that are appropriate for individual students. This statewide planning idea is not intended to track all EMH students into a static curriculum; rather, it facilitates IEP planning and minimizes redundancy of effort in outlining skill sequences.

Activities. Return now to the student for whom you are developing an individualized program. Write three or four instructional objectives for each goal you have written.

Special education and related services. The specific special education and related services needed by students according to their evaluations must be listed in their IEPs, including the extent of time to be spent in regular education. A range of placement options, ranging from least to most restrictive, should exist in the school district, including regular class placement with consultant or resource help, part- or full-time special class placement, and the more restrictive placement in a special facility. The amount of time to be spent with nonhandicapped peers should be noted; the least restrictive placement that is the most conducive to learning should be the placement goal.

As stated earlier, the regulations define "special education" as specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of handicapped students and "related services" as those services necessary to help the student benefit from special education. These services might include counseling, speech pathology and audiology, transportation, physical and occupational therapy, and other supportive and corrective services. According to the IEP Interpretation,

> Each public agency must provide a free appropriate public education to all handicapped children under its jurisdiction. Therefore, the IEP for a handicapped child must include all of the specific special education and related services needed by the child--as determined by the child's current evaluation. This means that the services must be listed in the IEP even if they are not directly available from the local agency, and must be provided by the agency through contracts or other arrangements.
>
> The public agency responsible for the education of a handicapped child could provide IEP services to the child (1) directly, through the agency's own staff resources, or (2) indirectly, by contracting with another public or private agency, or through other arrangements. In providing the services, the agency may use whatever State, local, Federal, and private sources of support are available for those purposes. However, the services must be at no cost to the parents, and responsibility for ensuring that the IEP services are provided remains with the public agency.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5471)

Activities. *How much time should the student for whom you are writing an IEP spend in the regular school program? What type of special education and related services will (s)he need to benefit from the educational program?*

Projected dates. The dates when services are to be initiated and the anticipated duration of the services must be listed on the IEP. These dates are often listed as the beginning of the year or the date when services begin through the end of the year, which is the typical duration of many services. Some corrective services or certain types of therapy might have a shorter predicted duration.

The requirement appears to have two general purposes: 1) to specify in writing the initiation of special services for the student and thus assure the parents that services will be forthcoming; and 2) to project a time frame for related services, such as counseling, health or psychological services, occupational or physical therapy, or other temporary services, as an aid in educational planning for the child. The guidelines do not require projections about when goals and objectives will be accomplished.

The evaluation component. The evaluation procedures and schedules make up the final requirement in the IEP contents. The IEP is a means of managing special education and related services for each exceptional student; however, without a strong evaluation component to determine whether objectives are being accomplished, the IEP process could be a useless exercise in planning. The evaluation requirement consists of three parts: criteria, procedures, and schedules.

Without objective criteria for mastery, the decision about whether or not the student has accomplished an objective is left to the subjectivity of the teacher or evaluator. Criteria could be listed in the IEP as a part of the objectives or as a separate section. Behaviorally stated objectives that include the conditions, performance, and standards have incorporated the criteria for evaluation. These formal objectives are more tedious to write but easier to evaluate. This precision in measurement is most important for basic skill acquisition and for measuring progress of students who are learning the foundations upon which most of their future education will be based. At this level more than at any other, systematic record keeping of student progress is critical. The specification of current levels of performance in behavioral terms, the statement of behavioral objectives, and the collection of baseline and progress data, will help teachers make sound instructional decisions about individual students.

Criteria for mastery might be stated as a percentage of correct responses, as a number of correct answers out of a set of questions, as an amount of time in which an appropriate behavior will be observed, as a number of checks out of a possible number of items on a performance checklist, as a minimum or maximum number of behaviors in a specified time span. The criteria must be objective and appropriate. Criteria for academic achievement should reflect criteria set for nonhandicapped students. For instance, it would be inappropriate to expect 90% accuracy on a spelling test for a handicapped child when 70% was the school criterion for passing. Successive approximations might entail an evolving criterion and some behaviors may appropriately demand 100% correct performance. For example, the following objectives were written for an emotionally handicapped eighth grader:

> By the end of the first semester, Lee will decrease his physically aggressive behaviors from daily to weekly to no more than one incident per month.
> During the second semester, Lee will display no physical aggression that causes him to be sent to the office or punished by the teacher.

A variety of procedures for documenting and evaluating student progress in ways other than the traditional teacher-made, paper-and-pencil, objective or subjective tests might be explored. Standardized and criterion-referenced tests are useful for measuring certain skill attainments while informal inventories measure others. Teacher observation and frequency counts are other forms of data collection that can be informal and on-going or systematically occur at specific intervals. Checklists of basic skills and successive approximations toward desired behaviors are useful in some situations. Graphs or charts are sometimes helpful in charting progress. Anecdotal records may be kept on some students. Student self-evaluation and record keeping may offer means of keeping students and parents informed of daily progress. A variety of procedures should be used to ensure continuous evaluation, not limited to the annual assessment of the mastery of instructional objectives.

Evaluation schedules might call for weekly or monthly check points in some situations but will more often need to occur more frequently in order to keep students informed of their progress and to help teachers make realistic instructional decisions for students. Evaluation also helps to inform the

IEP team, including the child's parents, about the student's progress and future directions for planning on at least an annual basis. However, it is worth reiterating at this point that the evaluation component is not intended to hold teachers, the agency, or others accountable if a child does not achieve the growth projected in the objectives. The IEP is not a legally binding contract nor is it a guarantee that a student will progress at the projected rate. Teachers and agencies must make good faith efforts to assist students in accomplishing the objectives of the IEP and parents are protected by due process procedures and the right to complain if the parent feels reasonable efforts are not being made to assist the student.

Activities. Now for a moment, return to your student with performance levels, goals and objectives already written. Are the goals realistic expectations for one year? Are objectives behaviorally stated, easy to observe or evaluate, logically sequenced, useful guidelines for a teacher, realistic for the student? What evaluation procedures seem reasonable for each objective? What schedules or timelines for evaluation are appropriate?

IEP format. The format and length of the IEP are not prescribed by law. Depending upon the nature and severity of the handicap, the IEP will include varying portions of a student's educational program; therefore, IEPs will vary in length. The IEP Interpretation suggests the following:

> The format and length of an IEP are matters left to the discretion of State and local agencies. The IEP should be as long as necessary to adequately describe a child's program. The IEP is not intended to be a detailed instructional plan. The Federal IEP requirements can usually be met in a one to three page form.
>
> (IEP Interpretation, Page 5472)

Activities. 1) P. L. 94-142 does not require schools to provide each handicapped child with an optimal education, but rather an appropriate one. Discuss the implications of this for handicapped students and their parents, for the decision-makers planning handicapped students' educational programs *and placement, and for the local or state education agency. 2) Figure 8 contains a sample IEP for Mary B.--the first case study in this module. Mary has no problems in arithmetic nor in reading, but the spelling problem is causing difficulties in all of her writing. Compare her IEP with the one you have written for Case Study One or your own new referral. Figure 9 provides a blank IEP for your practice and use.*

IEPs at the Secondary School Level

A variety of issues surrounding the development and implementation of IEPs presents unique problems at the junior and senior high school levels. The federal regulations do not differentiate between elementary and secondary models for educating students with special needs so the same rules apply at both levels. Little is written that distinguishes the problems facing each level; however, the students, teachers, and curricula are very different, all of which affect the IEP process. The development of IEPs by team members who recognize the unique needs of secondary students and teachers should help to allay problems of implementation that might otherwise be created by a team less sensitized to secondary issues. Situations unique to secondary schools will be confronted in this section from three perspectives: students teachers, and curricula.

Students. Three points for discussion involving the secondary school student follow: the nature of adolescence, the increased student numbers at the secondary level, and the spectrum of abilities.

The IEP process is predicated upon the essential element of parent involvement; however, the "adolescent" creates new problems in attaining this involvement not often produced by the "child." Many adolescents do not want their parents to be too involved with their schooling and many parents respect this need for independence. Creative ways to involve parents in IEP planning and implementation should be explored while, at the same time, students should be

Figure 8

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

IEP TEAM

Student Mary B.
Parent(s) Mr. and Mrs. B.
Teacher(s) Mr. Black (classroom)
Miss Smith (resource)
Agency Representative Dr. Armstrong (special educ. supervisor)
Other(s) Ms. Rose (school psychologist)

STUDENT INFORMATION

D.O.B. 8-17-69 Age 12-1 Grade 6
Phone 555-0032 Address 139 Western Blvd.
School Traceland Elementary

PROCEDURAL CHECKLIST - DATE

Written notice about program initiation/change	9-1-81
Consent for preplacement evaluation	9-4-81
Consent for initial placement	9-21-81

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	DATE INITIATED	DURATION
remedial assistance -- resource room	Smith	9-25-81	fall semester, review in Jan
consultation with Mr. Black about classroom strategies and grading alternatives	Smith	9-23-81	weekly meetings for 2 mos.

EXTENT OF TIME IN REGULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM 95% ; 2 hours a week in resource room

EVALUATION DATA

WISC-R (9-5-81) Verbal - 105, Performance - 88, Full scale - 97
Vineland Social Maturity Scale (9-6-81) Age equivalent 10-4 (CA 12-1)
Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Information (9-6-81) Age equivalent 9-7
California Achievement Test (4-8-81) Math 5-9, spelling 2-8, reference 5-2, language arts 4-8, reading 5-4, total 4-1
Modality Preference Testing Procedure (9-16-81) Auditory mode

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PRESENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION PROCEDURES
California Achievement Test Spelling 2-8. Visual memory problems, i.e., learns better through auditory mode. Spells Dolch words with 70% accuracy. Spells a random list of survival words with 80% accuracy. Reverses order of letters frequently in 3-letter words; however, spells most 3-letter word families in 1st-2nd grade spellers correctly.	Mary will increase number of basic and survival words correctly spelled. Mary will increase spelling level as measured by the California Achievement Test by two grade levels.	By January, Mary will have systematically reviewed the Dolch words and two lists of survival words. Mary will spell selected lists of Dolch words and survival words at grade level with 80% accuracy during the fall semester. Mary will practice spelling 2-3 word families each week. Mary will correctly spell 5 new root words each week with 80% accuracy. Mary will properly write the new root words with selected prefixes and suffixes with 80% accuracy. Mary will correctly syllabicate weekly word lists with 90% accuracy. Using sound-spelling and phonovisual approaches, Mary will spell correctly 5 new words each week with 80% accuracy. Using language experience techniques, Mary will spell correctly 5 new words from her vocabulary weekly with 80% accuracy.	Weekly spelling quizzes and monthly spelling bees with other students having spelling difficulties.

PRESENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION PROCEDURES
	Mary will improve spelling in the content areas.	Mary will list words that are misspelled in her papers for social studies, science, and other assignments on index cards for resource and home practice and drill.	Monthly oral quizzes on a tape recorder on words that are listed--repeat until 75% accuracy is attained.
Handwriting is messy and often illegible--needs improvement, especially in cursive writing.	Mary will increase the neatness of her handwriting the second half of the year.	Mary will use pencil grips, lined paper, graphs, and other devices to aid penmanship, beginning in January. The number of illegible words written will decrease to no more than two per page in any written assignment by the end of the academic year.	No penalty during first intensive spelling remediation (Sept.-Dec.). Bonus points for neatness begins in Jan. Illegible words will be rewritten. Penalty points for illegible words more than 2 per page.

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Figure 9

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

IEP TEAM

Student______________________________

Parent(s)______________________________

Teacher(s)______________________________

____

Agency Representative____________________

____

Other(s)______________________________

STUDENT INFORMATION

D.O.B.____________ Age________ Grade________

Phone____________ Address______________________________

School____

PROCEDURAL CHECKLIST - DATE

Written notice about program initiation/change ____________________

Consent for preplacement evaluation ____________________

Consent for initial placement ____________________

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	DATE INITIATED	DURATION

EXTENT OF TIME IN REGULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM ______________________________

EVALUATION DATA

PRESENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION PROCEDURES

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PRESENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION PROCEDURES

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encouraged to accept increased responsibility for planning their own educational programs. Many students, especially at the secondary level, could make viable IEP team members, yet they too often remain an untapped resource.

The number of handicapped students served by an individual classroom teacher is likely to increase significantly at the secondary level, which has implications for the feasibility of involving classroom teachers in writing IEPs and of individualizing instruction. If it is true that about 12 per cent of the school-aged population are handicapped and that the majority are mainstreamed for at least a portion of the day (Progress toward a free appropriate public education, 1979), then an average elementary class of 30 students might include three or four handicapped students, while a 125-150 student load for a junior or senior high teacher might include as many as 15-18 handicapped individuals. The greater numbers of students that a secondary teacher is responsible for, coupled with complex, inflexible schedules, diminish a teacher's possibility for attending to students on an individual basis, either in planning or inplementing educational programs.

The challenge is increased as the students' ability range broadens and the course focus narrows. While a first grade teacher may teach nonreaders as well as one or two students who read up to four or five grade levels above the first grade expectation, a junior high school teacher will still encounter readers functioning at primary levels as well as the whole spectrum up through high school levels. This wide ability range found in a 50-minute class period increases the difficulty of individualized planning and teaching.

One suggestion for the principal is to recognize the teacher's right to become involved with the IEP process by providing released time for IEP meetings and special/classroom teacher coordination. Weighting students (e.g., counting an emotionally handicapped student as three students and a mentally handicapped or learning disabled student as two students in determining roll counts and class loads) might be a consideration for the IEP team member who is responsible for determining or guaranteeing placement options. This process accounts for the varying amounts of time required to accommodate different types of students in class and compensates for greater requisite teacher efforts by decreasing class counts.

One suggestion for the IEP team is to consider a variety of placement options with self-contained half or full day special class placement as a serious consideration for handicapped students who deviate significantly from age- or grade-appropriate norms, either in academic or behavioral areas. This option should be considered for students whose emotional, learning, or mental handicap is severe enough to preclude success in the regular classroom. Another recommendation for the IEP team is to consider ways to narrow the spectrum of abilities found in many classes. Some degree of ability grouping within classes and within subject areas recognizes the limits to the range of abilities that can be accommodated in any classroom.

These suggestions--time for IEP planning; reduced class size to accommodate students with special needs; appropriate placements for mildly, moderately, and severely handicapped students; and a trend towards more homogeneous grouping or, at least, less radical heterogeneous grouping--might lead to teachers' increased ability to provide appropriate, individualized instruction for their students.

Teachers. Two issues involving secondary teachers will be related in this section: the nature of the secondary teacher and coordination of teachers for IEP development/implementation.

The IEP is based upon an individual child orientation which typifies elementary school settings and the thinking of most special educators, but this is not usually the case at the secondary level where teachers are typically subject oriented. If IEP planners are sensitive to this potential problem which is often manifested in the adherence to rigid curricula coupled with rigid criteria for evaluation, perhaps they will recognize the following three requisites for coordinating teachers for IEP development and implementation: involve classroom teachers in the IEP process before placement occurs whenever possible, use the consultant model to some extent, and delineate responsibilities of all teachers/support personnel involved with educating the student.

Because most secondary level teachers are subject oriented and unaccustomed to sharing the responsibility for instructing their students and, further, because most are not trained in special education nor did they ever want to be, it is essential that they are permitted involvement from the very beginning in the IEP process. Carolyn Myrick's 1980 dissertation study results indicate limited involvement of classroom teachers in the IEP process--nearly one third in her sample has never seen an IEP; over half of the classroom teachers had no training in developing IEPs; elementary schools had more positive perceptions of the IEP process than secondary schools; classroom teachers had the most negative attitudes about the IEP process; all groups perceived the special educator as the person who should have primary responsibility for developing IEPs.

Some of the most important planning for handicapped students occurs before the IEP team meeting and results from the classroom teacher's input. The student's regular teacher can provide valuable classroom performance data that is curriculum based and provides meaningful information upon which to base current levels of performance. Teachers are also more familiar with their curriculum and with objectives that are essential and appropriate for handicapped learners. If teachers who have the major responsibility for educating handicapped students are not allowed to feel some degree of responsibility or "ownership" in the IEP planning and placement of students, they will probably be reluctant to implement the plans.

A variety of special educators will be needed to facilitate a variety of placement options; at least one of those educators should have consultant responsibilities to teachers in classes that include handicapped students. Often students get help and teachers get none; teachers must become more assertive in demanding the help they need. Too many teachers who are trained in specific subject areas and are being asked to accommodate exceptional students are not provided the assistance needed to facilitate the process, not only inservice help, but also ongoing consultant support. If a resource model is used, the teacher should be provided with sufficient support to effectively teach students when they are not receiving resource instruction. Support services for the student in the regular classroom and consultant help for the classroom teacher should be included in the IEP. Teachers should ask the school based committee for the support they need to keep mildly handicapped students in class within the teacher's parameters and classroom's limitations.

The division of responsibility, when often six to eight professionals are charged with educating an individual, can be confusing. Although legally it is not a required component of the IEP, it is an important aspect of planning that should be made very clear verbally or preferably on the IEP document in writing. Elementary school children usually have one primary teacher who is responsible for the whereabouts of that child all day and every day. The teacher may have scheduling problems with students coming and going, but the student has the continuity of one teacher who is "in charge." Most handicapped students still need that continuity when they reach junior and senior high school. The most reasonable secondary level teacher to provide this leadership might be the special educator or another professional who is responsible for the student for the primary part of the day. Coordinating planning periods may be a problem for teachers which could be resolved by the principal. The early involvement of classroom teachers in the IEP process, use of consultants, and coordination for shared responsibility are important factors for the successful planning for the integration of handicapped youth into the regular classroom.

Curricula. The secondary school curriculum raises three issues that will be addressed in this section: the compatibility of vocational and special education, the relationship between the IEP contents and secondary level curriculum priorities, and the degree to which individualization is feasible.

As youth approach adulthood and the world of work, vocational education becomes an increasingly important part of their educational programs; therefore, one of the primary goals of secondary school programs for handicapped students must be the preparation of these young adults for gainful employment. The IEP must include vocational goals if special adaptations are necessary and vocational educators should play active roles in IEP team meetings.

The two fields are each so specialized that often the teachers in each area know little about the other area. Vocational teachers will probably need staff development programs in IEP development, adapting materials, the characteristics and capabilities of exceptional learners, vocational assessment for handicapped students, exploratory instruction that uses hands-on activities, legal responsibilities of vocational educators for handicapped students, and equipment modifications. Vocational teachers must learn ways to organize their courses to allow students of various abilities to explore their talents, capabilities, and interests, understanding that students can benefit by learning job skills even when they do not seek employment in the subject taught.

Special education teachers should provide career exploration and vocational instruction in their classes. A vocational resource teacher or consultant trained in both vocational and special education is very important to the successful integration of handicapped students in vocational classes especially at the high school level. Administrators and school based team leaders can help facilitate the cooperative work of special and vocational educators to maximize the benefits to students and IEPs can describe the responsibilities of each.

The content of the IEP must not conflict with curriculum priorities at the secondary level, such as graduation requirements, competency test objectives, grading standards set by individual schools or school districts, state mandated curricula or systemwide objectives for courses that are so lengthy that individualized pacing is not feasible, and state adopted texts that do not provide a variety of reading levels.

IEPs must account for Carnegie Units, semester hours, or courses required in various disciplines for graduation from high school. Some states also require a passing grade on a competency test as a prerequisite for receiving a high school diploma. IEP goals should reflect the remediation needed to pass such a test. Some accommodations for taking the test are made for various handicaps, such as extended time limits, braille and taped versions of the test.

Rigid grading and curricula present real concerns at the secondary level. The structure of some courses will not allow for the accommodation of some students or for individualization of instruction. For instance, in order to be prepared for geometry and Algebra II, a student must master the objectives of Algebra I. The course is generally not conducive to individual or small group instruction but rather demands fast-paced large group instruction to cover the vast quantity of material required in the course curriculum. Some curricula are mandated by the state and often grading criteria are set by the school system. For instance, in many schools, to receive an A grade, a student--any student--must average 93 or above on course assignments and tests. A grade of B demands 85 through 92 averages and the cutoff for a passing mark is 70. These criteria might influence the evaluation standards and procedures described in the IEP.

Some courses are required to use state adopted texts that have reading levels that some students cannot comprehend. Accommodations for this situation should be discussed by the IEP team or school based committee. Sometimes supplementary texts and workbooks can be purchased. The text might be rewritten on a lower grade level, but this requires a significant time commitment and considerable expertise. If reasonable accommodations to guarantee the student's success are not feasible, the IEP team might consider an alternative placement.

The degree to which individualization is feasible is influenced by the attitudes and expertise of the teachers involved, the materials (including texts) available, and the nature of the course. Attitudes are often improved by increased expertise which can be facilitated through staff development efforts and the use of consultants. Special materials, equipment, and resources needed may be discussed at the IEP meeting and might be included in some goals and objectives. Some courses will be inappropriate for certain students. The nature of other courses will demand a cope-with-the-curriculum or tutorial approach by resource teachers. These courses require the same minimum competency for a set of objectives for all students with flexibility only in the teaching strategies used in attaining the objectives. Other courses which allow for the individualization of goals and objectives as well as learning styles may require remedial teaching from resource personnel and consultant help with classroom management, teaching strategies, materials development, and so on.

Conclusions. As more and more students are encouraged to stay in school until graduation, new roles and innovations will emerge at the secondary school level. One of the most important challenges of individualizing instruction in secondary schools is the promotion of active involvement by parents and students in the preparation of an individualized education program. With this involvement must come a range of positive alternatives for secondary students, including access to vocational education programs, and new and difficult role changes for general and special educators.

Activities. *1. Figure 10 includes an IEP for Kelly, the second case study in this module. Read through it, compare it with Mary's IEP, and discuss the differences that might occur in a) IEPs for elementary and secondary students and b) IEPs for different types and severity of handicaps.*

2. If you have been working on the parts of an IEP for Kelly, Mary, or another student, you might want to fit the parts of your program into the format in Figure 11. Then compare the goals, objectives, and so on that you developed to the two samples included in this module.

Figure 10

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

IEP TEAM

Student Kelly R.

Parent(s) Mr. and Mrs. R.

Teacher(s) Ms. Brown (voc. ed.), Mr. Jones (sp. ed.), Mr. Turner (rd. spec.)

Agency Representative Mrs. Johnson (principal)

Other(s)

STUDENT INFORMATION

D.O.B. 6-2-65 Age 16 Grade 10

Phone 555-4162 Address 12 Holly Court - Apt. 3

School West View High School

PROCEDURAL CHECKLIST - DATE

Written notice about program initiation/change	11-20-81
Consent for preplacement evaluation	9-02-77
Consent for initial placement	9-28-77

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	DATE INITIATED	DURATION
remedial reading and math - daily	Turner/Stone	12-01-81	review IEP 5-10-82
vocational education - in class help 3 times weekly	Brown	12-01-81	
tutorial help in social studies & science; lab assistance	Jones	12-03-81	
special class in basic skills one hour weekly	Jones	12-08-81	
bi-weekly consultation with 4 core subject area teachers	Jones	11-11-81	

EXTENT OF TIME IN REGULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM 80% in regular classes & 20% in remedial classes

EVALUATION DATA

WISC-R (10-80) Verbal - 68, Performance - 72, Full Scale - 70
PIAT (10-80) math - 6.7, word recognition - 4.4, comprehension - 4.0, spelling - 4.8, total - 5.0
WRAT (10-80) math - 6.9, reading - 4.6, spelling - 5.0
Vineland Social Maturity Scale - (10-80) Age Equivalent 12-8, Chronological age 16-4
Modality Preference Testing Procedure - (10-80) visual mode

PRESENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION PROCEDURES
		Reading Lab: Given small group instruction, Kelly will...	
Comprehends at 4.0 level. Spells at 5.0 level.	Kelly will increase his reading to at least the 5.0 level and spelling to the 6.0 level. Kelly will increase his writing skills using occupational tasks.	Spell & define survival words, words typically found on a job application, and other vocationally related words. Write simple sentences & paragraphs correctly. Accurately complete such forms/letters as applications, registration forms, thank you notes, want ad replies. Evaluate information in want ads. Communicate effectively on the telephone. Define abbreviations commonly used on application forms. Describe a resume verbally; list reasons for using a resume; write a resume for himself. List 5 elements of a successful interview; appropriately answer 10 sample interview questions. Read high interest-low level books, selected by Kelly and approved by Mr. Turner, no less than 1 bi-weekly. Read a 15-minute daily assignment from the newspaper, with an occupational emphasis, or in workbook.	80% accuracy expected on all daily assignments. 85% accuracy expected on all teacher-made weekly quizzes. Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests will be used to test achievement semi-annually.
		Math Lab: In an individualized math lab, Kelly will...	
Reads, writes, and interprets correctly numerical information, cardinal and ordinal numbers. Progressing in subtracting decimals (math skills at 6.7 level). Uses calculator for most computation.	Kelly will increase his quantitative and numerical skills to at least a productive level (70-85% accuracy). Kelly will attain basic money management skills at a competent level (85-100% accuracy).	Discriminate among different sizes, shapes, textures. Define and correctly use such common numbers as zip codes, phone numbers, social security numbers. Estimate distances, sizes, and weights accurately. Correctly measure perimeter, weight, time, temperature. List common financial responsibilities and describe how to accommodate each; include obligations and luxuries. Discuss principles of banking; include credit, loans, savings. Match common coins/bills with their correct names. Accurately make change using up to $100. Distinguish between gross and net pay. Write sample checks correctly; balance check book. Fill in and compute time cards. Prepare biweekly and monthly budgets-data furnished.	All objectives will be checked on the following scale through weekly quizzes: ☐ Unfamiliar ☐ Introduced ☐ Progressing 50-70% success ☐ Productive 70-85% success ☐ Competent 85-100% success The Key Math Test will be used to test achievement semi-annually.

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PRESENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION PROCEDURES
No work experience using basic mechanical principles.	Kelly will attain pre-employment skills at an employable level including an understanding of	Job Skills: Given the requisite materials, tools, equipment, and training, Kelly will...	
	the free enterprise system,	Compare/contrast the American private enterprise system with other economic systems. Discuss investment opportunities, competition, automation, specialization, taxation. List the influences of labor organizations on the economy, business, and individuals. Name 5 reasons that demonstrate the value of work.	Participation in class discussions and work sample activities. Observation, oral and written quizzes.
	work possibilities and basic principles,	Explore various jobs and occupational clusters. Demonstrate a working knowledge of basic mechanical principles (e.g. levers, screws, pulleys, vacuums).	Bi-weekly check scale used for all objectives through oral and written assessment: ☐ Unfamiliar ☐ Maintaining ☐ Progressing 50-70% success ☐ Productive 70-85% success ☐ Employable 85-100% success
	good work habits,	List characteristics, abilities, attitudes, and habits of successful workers. Maintain appropriate personal hygiene and dress. Be on time consistently and accept consequences for tardiness. Work dependably and independently without direct, continuous supervision. Demonstrate concern/adherence to safety precautions.	
About a 4th grade reading level and weak in technical vocabulary. Strong in spelling with good dictionary skills (5.0 level).	occupational communications.	Read and follow written instructions correctly (e.g. labels, procedural manuals, street signs). Define and correctly use technical vocabulary at a level sufficient for work experience communication.	
As determined by a work sample inventory, Kelly's manual dexterity is not age appropriate (about 4 years behind).	Kelly will improve his manual dexterity.	Coordinate eye-hand-foot movements accurately. Coordinate the use of both hands effectively, including lifting, turning, pulling, placing, and using small hand tools and equipment. Demonstrate effective finger agility.	Monthly work sample assessment and successful completion of work sample kit activities as determined by teacher observation.

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OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION PROCEDURES
		Social Studies/Science	
About a 4th grade reading level.	Same as those for regular class using small group instruction.	Receives tutorial aid daily and lab assistance weekly. Follow basic objectives of class using alternative texts on third grade reading level.	Graded according to regular class criteria and schedules, using a contract system.
		Basic Skills: Given small group attention in a special class, Kelly will...	
Below age appropriate behaviors in memory, sequencing, organizing, decision-making, and listening. Attentive to written detail. Learns best through visual sense according to Modality Preference Test.	Kelly will improve his cognitive and perceptual skills.	Drill and practice through visual and hands-on experiences to improve his memory. Correctly order/sequence numbers, dates, directions, etc. Organize information to solve mathematical problems systematically. Select appropriately from decision-making alternatives. Listen carefully to discriminate sounds and their meanings and to remember oral instructions. Discriminate unique characteristics using visual and auditory cues.	Developmental Test of Visual-Motor Integration will be used semi-annually to determine if Kelly's basic skills (as listed) approach age appropriate.
Vineland Social Quotient - 83.	Kelly will maintain and clarify his social skills and occupational interests.	React appropriately to nonverbal cues, such as gestures, tones, body language. List personal strengths and correlate them with qualities sought by employers. Ask questions appropriately to gain information. Describe how to address others in a businesslike manner, including customers, fellow employees, supervisors, and management. Demonstrate acceptable work attitudes and behavior. Exercise patience and self-control under stress.	Weekly class grades should improve if the resource help is effective. A semi-annual self-appraisal scale will determine improvement in self-concept and social adjustment. Very slow and small increments on these 2 scales will determine success.

Developed by Ann L. Stewart and originally cited in:

Turnbull, A. P., Strickland, B. B., & Brantley, J. C. Developing and implementing individualized education programs (2nd ed.). Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1982.

Figure 11

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM

IEP TEAM

Student____________________

Parent(s)____________________

Teacher(s)____________________

____

Agency Representative________________

____

Other(s)____________________

STUDENT INFORMATION

D.O.B.__________ Age_______ Grade_______

Phone__________ Address____________________ ______

School______________________________

PROCEDURAL CHECKLIST - DATE

Written notice about program initiation/change __________
Consent for preplacement evaluation __________
Consent for initial placement __________

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	DATE INITIATED	DURATION

EXTENT OF TIME IN REGULAR EDUCATION PROGRAM ____________________

EVALUATION DATA

PRESENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION PROCEDURES

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PRESENT LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE	ANNUAL GOALS	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION PROCEDURES

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The Individualization Barrier of Secondary Education

Issues and recommendations for improving IEP's at the secondary level are described.

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Individualized education can become *impossible education* at the secondary level if legal requirements are not specially adapted to the organizational structure, teacher concerns, and student needs characteristic of secondary education. A key phrase in P.L. 94-142 identifies the legislative goal: *free appropriate public education* for all handicapped children.

The meaning of *appropriate* education is basically interpreted as an education *individually* suited to the needs of the student, *i.e.*, in conformity with IEP requirements. Although individualized instruction has traditionally received widespread support in preschool and elementary education, this is not necessarily the situation in secondary education.

Based on the philosophy of individualized instruction, the requirement was made in P.L. 94-142 to develop IEPs for all handicapped students regardless of age level. The required content of the IEP clearly shows its individualization emphasis:

- A documentation of the student's current level of educational performance.
- Annual short goals or the attainments expected by the end of the school year.
- Short-term objectives, stated in instructional terms, which are intermediate steps leading to the mastery of annual goals.
- Documentation of the particular special education and related services which will be provided to the child.
- An indication of the extent to which a child will participate in the regular education program.
- Projected dates for initiating services and the anticipated duration of services.
- Evaluation procedures and schedules for determining mastery of short-term objectives at least on an annual basis.

In regard to scope, the IEP must be written for every subject requiring specially designed instruction. This includes subjects taught in both regular classrooms in which the handicapped student is mainstreamed and specialized settings such as resource rooms, special classes, and special schools.

The emphasis of individualized instruction of the IEP mandate may cause implementation problems and lowered teacher morale at the secondary level. Research has provided little guidance since it has been limited to investigation of the development of the IEP. The key to full equality of opportunity for handicapped students is the effective implementation of the IEP. There is a dire need for research on IEP implementation and the associated student outcomes of such implementation, particularly at the secondary level. Future research should be directed to the delineation of specific problems separately at the elementary and secondary levels. Current research either mixes both levels or focuses on the elementary years.

In the next sections, issues germane to the IEP process and some unique to secondary education are discussed. These issues are as follows: 1) the nature of the secondary teacher and curriculum, 2) new requisite skill demands, 3) role ambiquity of participants, and 4) support systems.

The Nature of the Secondary Teacher and Curriculum

Issues. Although secondary teachers are typically subject matter oriented, the IEP presumes an individual child orientation. Individualized lessons are less feasible when planning daily for 125-175 students than when planning for typical elementary classloads. The ability range can be extreme as children get older and the achievement gap broadens. Systemwide and statewide goals and objectives might restrict curriculum alternatives by designing objectives to be reached for specific grades and subjects. Disdain for noninstructional demands (e.g., IEP writing, parent conferences, resource/classroom teacher coordination) and shared responsibility for classroom instruction typify secondary teachers' attitudes; the IEP may contribute to discord.

Recommendations. Elementary school models stress basic skill acquisition. The hierarchically ordered sequence is conducive to individualized planning in which goals are modified to meet individual needs. By intermediate grade levels, the range of needs expands and meeting those needs becomes increasingly difficult. This problem is augmented when the teacher's roll count is multiplied by five.

Two patterns of individualized instruction exist. The first, mentioned above, requires that goals of instruction and the means toward those goals be planned around the individual student. The second pattern prescribes unique means of attaining similar goals which is more suitable for a less hierarchically structured subject. For example, most eighth graders learn the beginnings of American history, the rudiments of which are basic to all students' schooling experience. Although goals may be diluted (e.g., number of presidents chronologically listed) and the mode of learning varied (e.g., by contract or by lecture), the curriculum is parallel for all students. Varying means and leaving goals relatively constant is more realistic for teachers with large class rolls and appropriate for secondary school students with attenuated curricula.

Combined with this second type of individualized planning is the need for statewide alternative curricula for exceptional students that coincide with the regular curricula. A modified scope and sequence might be adapted, for example, to the needs of students reading significantly below grade level or for visually or auditorially impaired students. These curriculum guides could expedite the objective writing phase of the IEP process, reduce noninstructional demands, and aid in individualized planning. Annual revision of the IEP might be minimal, require less time to write, and be useful to teachers.

New Requisite Skill Demands

Issues. Universities are reluctant to add new course requirements, yet the preservice needs of secondary classroom teachers are not typically being met (Miller, Sabatino, & Larsen, 1980). Classroom teachers are well schooled in the content areas but often lack training in methodology, diagnostic-prescriptive instruction, and other challenges of mainstreaming. Secondary school special educators are frequently ill-prepared to teach effectively the variety of content areas and levels. Classroom and special education teachers typically lack the vocational education background necessary for the secondary level. Too often inservice does not meet skill demands. As a result, the remediation versus cope-with-the-curriculum debate continues, and students receive bandaids where tourniquets are needed.

Recommendations. Universities must specify competencies requisite for teachers of mainstreamed students and secondary special educators, and provide the necessary program. A special education course for all education majors or incorporating competencies into the existing course of studies appear to be viable options. Greater emphasis on career education is needed for secondary regular and special education majors (Miller et al, 1980). Meanwhile, school systems are obliged by law to provide inservice training based upon the assessed needs for new and retrained personnel (U.S. Office of Education, 1977). Staff development programs might include the efficient use of IEPs, task analysis, alternative learning strategies, individualization, the use of peer tutoring and grouping patterns, and career planning for students.

Role Ambiguity of Participants

Issues. Role ambiguity is often the consequence of shared responsibility for student learning. Secondary teachers lack lucid job descriptions and are often unaccustomed to working closely with other adults; communication gaps and misunderstanding are commonplace.

In the responsibility tug-of-war, students can lose. Secondary special needs students are often required to cope with added specialists and a complicated schedule.

Recommendations. Job descriptions must be stated for clarity of expectations. Shared responsibility is antithetical to the territorial nature of the secondary school teacher and the compartmentalized organization of typical secondary schools. The resource-classroom teacher coordination could be assuaged through written job descriptions and a clear delineation of responsibility on the IEP even though this is not required by P.L. 94-142. These measures protect teachers' rights, provide a coordinated effort, and gain efficient services for students. Special educators should encourage parents to share in the responsibility for their children's learning by planning IEP team meetings at convenient times and specifying a clear and meaningful role for the parents.

For efficiency the special educator might prepare a preliminary IEP draft written in conjunction with classroom teachers. The faculty-parent ratio is not overbearing if one or two teachers represent the youth's regular classroom experience. The LEA representative should be the school psychologist for initial placement or otherwise the director of special services, principal, school counselor, or the chairperson of the special services committee. Coordinated roles for team members should be developed.

Community volunteers and aides likewise need role clarification in implementing IEPs. To gain commitment, school personnel should provide clear and meaningful expectations, training, and reinforcement.

Support Systems

Issues. Without strong administrative, fiscal, and attitudinal support, mainstreaming and the IEP process are unlikely to be effective. Staff development, clerical assistance, and reinforcement of teachers for additional efforts regarding the IEP are sometimes insufficient.

Resource teachers and IEPs, designed to support classroom teachers, can become a hindrance if lack of coordination or unusable information takes away from instructional tasks. Although the least restrictive placement principle of P.L. 94-142 requires that the child be placed in an *appropriate* setting, some students may be inappropriately placed in the regular classroom in the name of mainstreaming and cost reduction.

Recommendations. Since monetary compensation is not available for IEP writing and implementation, administrators must create other forms of reinforcement. Along with special education support services, verbal praise is a fundamental reinforcement. Teachers' information needs could be met through useful, behaviorally-stated student profiles and a workable referral process. Volunteers and aides could relieve teachers of some clerical duties while resource-consultants provide assistance in the basic subject areas. If resource teachers dropped their caseloads in late May or early June to write preliminary IEPs, resource services and instruction could begin with regular classes the next fall. Teacher morale is improved by allowing similar amounts of early year planning time and assistance in starting special needs students off with adequate support. Central office personnel should furnish materials, release time, and inservice.

A spectrum of service options for IEP planning is essential for appropriate implementation. While mainstreaming might be the goal for all students, special class placement must be an option for the severe learning disabled, some educable mentally handicapped, and the emotionally handicapped students who are disruptive to classmates' learning. Self-contained classes or half-day program options recognize that there are limits to the range of abilities that can be served in the regular classroom.

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Regular Classroom Teacher Involvement in the Development and Utilization of IEP's

MARLEEN C. PUGACH

Professionals responsible for educating exceptional children have the opportunity, during the development of the individualized education program (IEP), to collaborate with parents in planning effective instructional strategies and requisite supportive services. Ideally, during the IEP process, available knowledge regarding a student's current level of performance is used to determine specific and reasonable expectations for the coming year (The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, Public Law 94-142, Section 4(a)(19), 1975). The likelihood of attaining such expectations, which are drafted in the form of annual goals and short-term objectives, is maximized when IEP's are developed by those individuals most familiar with the settings in which they will be implemented.

The regular classroom teacher is likely to be the principal provider of instruction to mildly handicapped students classified as learning disabled, educable mentally retarded, or behavior disordered (Rucker & Vautour, 1978). It is reasonable to assume, then, that the development of an IEP for a mildly handicapped student would reflect the joint participation of regular and special education teachers, both of whom have major responsibilities for instruction. However, in spite of their increased instructional responsibilities, it appears that regular classroom teachers are not actively involved in IEP development for mildly handicapped students (Goldstein, Strickland, Turnbull, & Curry, 1980; Marver & David, 1978; Rucker & Vautour, 1978). While previous research on IEP's has documented the role of the regular classroom teacher in the actual IEP meeting, the current study was designed to generate information regarding the nature and extent of regular teacher involvement in and utilization of IEP's for mildly handicapped students both prior to and following the initial IEP meeting.

SAMPLE

Thirty-three regular class elementary school teachers from a midwestern school district with a total enrollment of approximately 8,000 students participated in the study. Resource teachers for learning disabilities are located in each of the 10 elementary schools in the district, with resource teachers for behavior disorders in two elementary schools. From the 10 schools, 49 teachers were randomly selected from all classroom teachers serving at least one learning disabled or behavior disordered student who was receiving resource room assistance. Of the original sample, 29 were randomly selected to complete a questionnaire and 20 were asked to participate in an interview with the same questionnaire serving as the interview schedule. Twenty-nine teachers in the original sample and four replacement subjects agreed to participate; in all, 23 questionnaires and 10 interviews formed the data base. Of the respondents, 30 were female and 3 were male.

PROCEDURE

The questionnaire consisted of 19 questions. Five items requested demographic information: years of teaching experience, years at present building, type of certification held, highest degree earned, and amount of inservice training related to IEP's. Eleven items requested specific data regarding planning for the instruction

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of mildly handicapped students, for example, number of students served, number initially referred by teacher, number of IEP meetings attended, and whether goals and objectives were written for student time in the regular classroom. Two questions were five-point Likert scales consisting of five items each and rated on a scale from 5 (always) to 1 (never). The first scale concerned teacher involvement in IEP development and the second concerned frequency of teacher utilization of IEP's. Items from these scales appear in Tables 1 and 2. The single open-ended question elicited suggestions for potential changes at the building level which might encourage classroom teachers to take a more active role in IEP development. Responses to the two rating scales were used to derive two scores for each respondent—one for teacher involvement in IEP development and one for teacher utilization of IEP's. Also, a correlation matrix using Pearson's r was developed for 11 of the variables on the questionnaire.

RESULTS

Mean scores for each item on the involvement and utilization scales are shown in Tables 1 and 2. Analysis of the data shows teacher involvement in IEP development most often occurs by conferring with the special education teacher ($X = 4.45$) and by providing information regarding current levels of student performance ($X = 4.36$), but not on specific goals, objectives, and support services needed to implement instructional programs. Of the teachers, 52% had attended the most recent meeting at which an IEP was initially developed or annually reviewed; one teacher could not remember whether she had attended an IEP meeting. When they made the initial referral for a mildly handicapped child, teachers were more likely to attend the IEP meeting ($r = .56$, $p < .01$).

Of the subjects, 67% reported that no goals or objectives were written in the IEP for the time mildly handicapped students spent in their classrooms; nine stated that goals and objectives were written for time in the regular classroom, and two additional teachers did not know whether or not they had been written. One teacher had asked the resource teacher to include specific goals and objectives, but stated she had never seen the IEP and was not really sure if they had been included.

Several comments regarding involvement in IEP development were made during interviews and in responses to the open-ended question. A number of teachers expressed concern that the goals of the special and regular education programs lacked coordination and that special education goals were rarely related to goals in the regular classroom. While the goal of a regular classroom teacher may be to improve a child's group interaction skills, the special education teacher may be primarily interested in academic progress. Different reading programs were sometimes used in special and regular

TABLE 1

Frequency of Response, Mean Score, and Standard Deviation for Five Items Describing Teacher Involvement in IEP Development

	Frequency						
Item	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Seldom*	*Never*	$\overline{X}$	SD
Fill out forms about student's education program	11	2	4	1	14	2.84	1.82
Confer with special education teacher	20	10	1	2	0	4.45	.83
Give information on current levels of student performance	19	11	1	0	2	4.36	1.03
Give information on goals and objectives	7	10	7	3	6	3.27	1.40
Suggest support services to help implement instructional programs	7	8	10	2	6	3.24	1.37

Note. Not all 33 respondents answered each item.

TABLE 2

Frequency of Response, Mean Score, and Standard Deviation for Five Items Describing Teacher Utilization of IEP's

Time of Utilization	*Always*	*Often*	*Sometimes*	*Seldom*	*Never*	$\overline{X}$	SD
	Frequency						
Prior to parent conferences	2	4	2	4	17	1.97	1.38
Prior to annual reviews	5	4	4	3	15	2.39	1.58
Prior to generating new instructional objectives	3	2	4	5	16	2.03	1.38
Prior to informal meetings with special education teacher	2	0	5	5	17	1.79	1.18
Prior to filling out report card	2	0	4	6	17	1.76	1.15

Note. Not all 33 respondents answered each item.

classrooms stressing entirely different approaches to instruction without coordination or explanation to the student. Regular classroom teachers were sometimes asked to work on specific skills deemed important only by the resource teacher. Also, teachers felt they had little input into decisions regarding the amount of time students spend with the resource teacher.

Three interviewees reported that they received more specific assistance with regard to instruction for visually and hearing impaired students enrolled in their classes than for learning disabled or behavior disordered students. Those who were most satisfied with their level of involvement in planning instructional programs for their mildly handicapped students had frequent, informal contact with the resource teacher which constituted an almost daily check on progress. A major concern, cited by 52% of the respondents, was the lack of time to make initial plans, develop IEP's with coordinated goals for special and regular education, and monitor instructional progress; little formal time appeared to be set aside for planning.

The analysis of mean scores in Table 2 indicates that teachers seldom utilized the IEP document in planning or monitoring instruction for mildly handicapped students. When IEP's were consulted, it was most often prior to annual reviews. Only 12% of the sample had IEP's on file in their classrooms. An additional 18% added that, since IEP's were on file, they were available to them on request. A correlation of .40 ($p < .05$) was obtained relating degree of utilization to number of IEP's on file.

Teachers suggested in their comments that copies of the IEP routinely should be given to the regular classroom teacher. Of the respondents, 34% reported that the IEP was a useful tool for the special education teacher but not for the classroom teacher, and only 15% said that utilizing the IEP for one mildly handicapped student had helped them to increase the specificity of instruction for other students as well. Those teachers who had participated in inservice training related to IEP's had higher utilization scores ($r = .48$, $p < .01$) than those who had not participated in some form of inservice training. Using scores derived from the rating scales for involvement and utilization, a correlation of .37 ($p < .05$) was obtained, which indicates only a slight relationship between development and utilization of IEP's accounting for only about 14% of the variance.

DISCUSSION

The majority of teachers in this sample were not systematically involved in developing IEP's for students for whom they had major instructional responsibility. While mean involvement scores appear relatively high, conferring with special education teachers and reporting current levels of student performance contributed most to the scores. These two procedures do not necessarily represent a departure from practices in place prior to the implementation of Public Law 94-142. Low levels of involvement regarding sharing in setting goals and objectives and specifying requisite support services suggest that decisions made with respect to placement and direction of instruction as documented in the IEP do not generally reflect the input of regular classroom teachers. Since goals and objectives are rarely written for student time in the regular classroom, typically the IEP does not reflect the total instructional program, but only that portion of instruction administered directly by special education teachers. It is unlikely that this approach promotes shared decision making or encourages consistent curricular modification across instructional settings.

A second conclusion relates to the importance of regular classroom teacher attendance at IEP meetings for mildly handicapped students. It is unlikely that coordinated instructional planning will be achieved without the presence of the classroom teacher at the IEP meeting. Teachers in this study routinely were not included in the IEP meeting. Those IEP meetings which were attended were usually for students the teacher had initially referred; however, only 34% of the mildly handicapped students were first referrals, and it is questionable whether the same level of activity is maintained for students who continue in special education from previous years.

With regard to utilization of IEP's, teachers expressed little need to consult the document; however, when teachers had ready access to the IEP, it was more likely to be utilized.

Keeping in mind the limitations of this and other IEP research, especially the use of small sample sizes, the following recommendations for research and practice are offered.

1. The fundamental principle of the planning process should be the coordination of goals in special and regular settings to remediate student difficulties as efficiently as possible. Focusing on regular teacher involvement in the entire process may increase teacher commitment to providing appropriate instruction to mildly handicapped students as well as students with similar problems who are not identified.
2. The difference in teacher involvement for newly referred students, in contrast to students who are continuing to receive special education services from previous years, needs study. When students are "carried over" from year to year, the new regular classroom teacher may not be included in the annual review and may have no systematic method of giving input into planning for the coming year.
3. The degree to which IEP's are utilized, as well as the necessity of their utilization, requires further study. It may be possible for teachers to be involved in the process without using the document itself, or the document may be a tangible reminder of necessary instructional adaptations.
4. The issue of quality of involvement—as opposed to quantity measured by attendance at IEP meetings—has yet to be resolved. A comparison of the quality of teacher involvement in IEP meetings where regular teachers do and do not participate in IEP meetings would be instructive.

Providing appropriate, high-quality education to mildly handicapped students is a persistent problem for special education, and it is the quality of assistance regular classroom teachers receive that will largely determine the success of the current service delivery model. Classroom teachers should be included in the IEP process equally whether students have problems that are perceived to have exact, definable solutions—as with visual or physical impairments—or problems that may require more fundamental instructional/management modifications, as with learning and behavior problems. The consistent practice of shared program planning offers the greatest likelihood of assuring adequate support for regular classroom teachers to meet the challenge of educating handicapped students.

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Guidelines for Assessing IEP Goals and Objectives

BARBARA TYMITZ-WOLF

■ Among the most specific mandates contained within Public Law 94–142 are those that refer to the required statements of annual goals and short-term objectives for the individualized education program (IEP). Adequacy in formulating goals and objectives is critical to the ultimate effectiveness of the IEP, as noted by Larsen and Poplin (1980): "Perhaps more than any other statement within the I.E.P. document, establishing annual goals and general objectives determines the success of a handicapped child's education" (p. 223). They added that "the objectives are by far the most useful component of the child's I.E.P. for instructional personnel" (p. 276).

WRITING IEP OBJECTIVES

The task of writing objectives is most often delegated to special education teachers (Goldstein, Strickland, Turnbull, & Curry, 1980; Turnbull, Strickland, & Goldstein, 1978). They, in turn, approach the task with varying degrees of confidence and, for that matter, satisfaction.

Special education teachers have come to use various strategies to complete the IEP's. Some turn to computerized lists of instructional objectives that school districts have compiled for IEP purposes. Others may refer to instructional objectives banks that are commercially produced. Many teachers prefer to compose their own goals and objectives, often relying on curriculum guides or scope-and-sequence charts. Still others derive objectives from an intuitive sense of "what should come next."

Regardless of the strategy used, teachers comment on the ambiguity they confront when attempting to specify objectives. This can be traced to several sources:

1. Assessment data which is incomplete. In this instance, a review of available data indicates a need for further tests and subtests which were not performed.
2. Assessment data which the teacher is unable to interpret for instructional purposes. In this instance, the terminology and test sophistication of the evaluator go beyond the teacher's expertise. Clarification of the data between teacher and evaluator may be complicated by time constraints, attitudinal factors, and mutual training inadequacies that make it difficult for the teacher to quickly grasp the nuances of assessment, as well as an inability of the evaluator to translate assessment information to provide direction for instructional planning.
3. Prevalence of confusing or empty jargon in assessment data. Professionals differ among themselves and between disciplines in the ways they define and use terms. An assessment profile may communicate significantly different information depending on individual interpretation. Variation in terminology affects both the development and implementation stages of the IEP process.
4. Concern about formulating the kind of goal and objective statements that will be useful in the classroom setting. Teachers express frustration about IEP's that have been developed in a *procedurally* satisfactory manner, but which offer little guidance for instructional planning (Tymitz, 1980b).

Substantive weaknesses in the IEP are due in part to the fact that teachers have been required to prepare and implement the documents before they have received training on how to do so (Deno & Mirkin, 1980). Although there are numerous lists of prepared objectives available, there is significantly less information that helps the teacher learn the skills necessary to compose and assess *interrelated* goals and objectives.

This work was developed under Grant No. G007905001/446AH90330 with the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of that agency, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

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As school personnel work to solve the problems arising from inadequacies in assessment procedures and reports, teachers who are responsible for writing statements of goals and objectives must simultaneously refine their skills. In a study of teacher performance in writing IEP goals and objectives, the most problematic area was teacher skill in generating statements that were logically and sequentially related (Tymitz, 1980a). Teachers stated that they were unaware of strategies to evaluate the adequacy of their written statements. Recognition of common pitfalls in formulating statements, as well as systematic evaluation of completed statements, can substantially contribute to their instructional usefulness.

RECOGNIZING PITFALLS

Short-term objectives (STO's) are subordinate to goals and should therefore reflect a hierarchical relationship to the goal. For example, a goal to improve skills in phonetic analysis should be accompanied by an objective that delineates a subskill of phonetic analysis such as pronouncing blends. Similarly, a goal to improve cursive writing skills might be accompanied by an objective emphasizing a subskill of forming lower-case curved letters. Written objectives that are not subordinate may reflect one or all of the following inadequacies:

Pitfall #1 **The objective may be a restatement of the goal.**

Example: *Goal:* Increase ability to complete story problems at grade level.

STO: Given a variety of grade-level story problems, child will complete 7 out of 10 with no errors.

Even though goals and objectives may be worded differently, they may nevertheless convey essentially the same content. This objective does not delineate a subskill of solving story problems such as identifying the mathematical operations or estimating sums. It suggests remediation by means of giving the child a task that he cannot do and merely lowering the standard of performance.

Writers of objectives frequently substitute principles of successive approximation (i.e., gradually increasing extent of skill) for those of task analysis (identifying subcomponents of a skill). Even with learners who are not highly motivated, subskill mastery can lead to goal achievement more readily than manipulating the standard of performance.

Consider this example. To achieve the goal of increasing roller skating ability, it would be sorely inappropriate to begin teaching the skill with the following short-term objective: "Given the necessary equipment and setting, child will skate half way down the incline without falling." Rather, it would be more appropriate to begin by teaching subskills such as balance, left-right rolling motion, and stopping strategies. *Beware of statements that attempt to teach a skill by requiring the child to perform that same skill in a limited fashion.*

Pitfall #2: **The objective may be an incomplete statement.**

Example: *Goal:* Increase ability to attend to oral directions.

STO: Given simple directions, student will repeat them and complete his assignments.

The three elements of a properly stated objective include the condition, performance, and standard (Mager, 1962). This condition is incomplete because it is unclear what is meant by "simple" directions. What characteristics of the directions will make them simple? What subskill is being emphasized? In this example, the standard has been omitted. There is no indication of how well or to what degree the behavior must be demonstrated.

It is equally important to note that the condition and performance statements are incorrect. The *condition statement* should specifically name the conceptual and/or physical material to be used. Conceptual materials describe a subskill of the goal (i.e., "Given a model to follow . . . ," "Given vocabulary progressing from grades 1 to 3 . . . "). Physical materials are named when a particular skill must be demonstrated with specific equipment (i.e., "Given lined paper . . . ," "Given a dictionary . . . ," "Given a metric ruler . . . ").

The *performance statement* describes what the student must *do*, based on the condition. In the example given in Pitfall #2, the performance statement includes more than one behavior. Thus, even if the standard were present, the behavior to which the standard should be applied would be unclear. Furthermore, the requirement that the student complete assignments goes beyond the focus of the goal. The student may acquire the ability to repeat directions, but may remain unable to complete a task because of cognitive deficits. Consequently, the assessment of the ability to repeat directions may be incorrect. A more appropriate short-term objective for the same goal might be: "Given directions which include two separate cues, student will verbally repeat both cues correctly."

Pitfall #3: **The objective may actually be a description of an activity.**

Example: *Goal:* Increase expressive language acquisition.

STO: Given a worksheet with pictures of toys and food, child will name all toy pictures with 100% accuracy.

Although this statement incorporates the condition, performance, and standard, it does not represent an appropriate short-term objective for IEP purposes. *Beware of statements that read like STO's but are actually descriptions of single instructional activities.* Typically, such statements create unusually lengthy IEP's. A more appropriate short-term objective for the same goal would be: "Given pictured stimuli of categories of common nouns, child will correctly identify by naming pictures spontaneously."

FIGURE 1
Checklist for Evaluation of Goals and Objectives

1. Does the goal statement refer to target areas of deficit?	**OR**	Have I written a goal which is unrelated to remediation needs described in present level of performance and assessment information?
2. Given the assessment data, is it probable that this goal could be achieved in a year (i.e., annual period for the IEP)?	**OR**	Is the goal so broad that it may take two or more years to accomplish?
3. Does the goal contain observable terms with an identified target area for remediation?	**OR**	Have I used words which fail to accurately describe the problem area or direction I am taking?
4. Have goals been written for each area of deficit?	**OR**	Do I have dangling data (data which indicates a need for remediation but has been overlooked)?
5. Is the scope of the objective appropriate?	**OR**	Have I written any objectives that encompass the entire year, thus making them annual goals?
6. Do the objectives describe a subskill of the goal?	**OR**	Have I failed to determine the hierarchy needed to teach the skill? • Did I simply rephrase the goal statement? • Did I describe a terminal skill, but only less of it?
7. Are the objectives presented in a sequential order?	**OR**	Have I listed the objectives in random order, unrelated to the way the skill would logically be taught?
8. Do the objectives show a progression through the skill to meet the goal?	**OR**	Do the objectives emphasize only one phase of a particular skill?
9. Does the objective contain an appropriately stated condition?	**OR**	Have I failed to describe the exact circumstances under which the behavior is to occur? • Have I described irrelevant or extaneous materials? • Does the condition refer to an isolated classroom activity?
10. Does the objective contain an appropriately stated performance using observable terms?	**OR**	Is the mode of performance (e.g., oral) different from the desired goal (e.g., written)?
11. Does the objective contain an appropriately stated standard?	**OR**	Is the standard unrelated to the assessment information and level of performance? • Am I using the performance statement as a standard? • Am I using percentages when the behavior requires alternative ways to measure? • Have I chosen arbitrary percentages?

This STO permits a number of instructional activities to be generated. Their exact nature can be geared to the child's level of progress, interests, and available materials. Thus, the child could be given a range of vocabulary words to practice within a variety of formats, such as worksheets, flashcards, picture books, or film.

Such a written statement meets the implicit purpose of objectives for the IEP. It addresses the reality that handicapped children often require repeated presentations of information employing alternative approaches. Which approach will be successful may not be known at the time the IEP is being developed. Objectives should be assessed for degree of latitude in delivering instruction to meet them.

EVALUATING WRITTEN OBJECTIVES

Research on the substantive adequacy of IEP's remains limited (Anderson, Barner, & Larson, 1978; Deno & Mirkin, 1980). Whether classroom instruction is (or can be) enhanced by the IEP is a corresponding concern. At one level it is clear that an IEP containing poorly written goals and objectives has little potential for guiding appropriate instruction. It is also true that recognizing the inadequacy of goals and objectives can be demanding, since some distinctions may be quite subtle. Figure 1 provides guidelines for that task in the form of a checklist.

REACHING THE ULTIMATE GOAL

Increasingly, as we identify and apply more efficient, effective strategies to improve the instructional utility of the individualized education program, goals and objectives will begin to address the mandate implied in providing appropriate education for handicapped children. Once these goals and objectives are properly defined and formulated, the real work of the teacher in delivering instruction begins. While the guidelines addressed in this discussion are not a panacea for all aspects of IEP instructional delivery, they can substantially facilitate critical first steps in individualizing instruction for special needs children.

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Issues Regarding the IEP: Teachers on the Front Line

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Each school year brings with it significant dates to be placed on the calendar by professionals. This school year and next, two dates emerge as being critical for any professional who provides special education or related services to handicapped children. The first significant date, last October 1, 1977, has come and gone. On that date an individualized education program (IEP) had to be developed for each eligible handicapped child in order to be counted for purposes of funding in compliance with the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, Public Law 94-142. The forthcoming date to remember will be September 1, 1978. On that date each local, intermediate, and state education agency must provide a free, appropriate public education to each handicapped child or stand in violation of the rights and protections set forth under federal law, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Public Law 93-112.

The October date has passed. As the new year begins, it is critical to look to September and identify what changes have been made for handicapped children and what changes yet remain so that they will be afforded the rights guaranteed in federal law. Professionals on the front line must respond in order to fulfill their responsibilities.

Since the passage of Public Law 94-142 in late November 1975, education agencies have undergone numerous policy and procedural changes. These changes have in turn generated considerable dialogue, both positive and negative, in communities and in faculty lounges across the country. The key elements of Public Law 94-142 are often misunderstood or little attempt is made to relate those key elements to the IEP. This article addresses this concern and explores how Public Law 94-142 makes teachers responsible and accountable for assuring that each handicapped child receive the required special education and related services set forth in the IEP.

Federal IEP Requirements

Public Law 94-142 requires that each eligible handicapped child receive an education designed to meet that child's unique learning needs. This specially designed instruction must be provided at no cost to the parents. In fact, the statute specifically requires the development of the IEP in order that the handicapped child receive an appropriate education. Therefore, the IEP becomes the cornerstone of the law and the management tool that parents, teachers, and other professionals, as well as the eligible student, can refer to when questions arise concerning resources or educational goals.

Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that the IEP, as required in Public Law 94-142, is one way to document assurance of an appropriate education. While we know that a written document must be produced according to federal requirements for every handicapped child, this requirement is not necessarily new. Many states have had some requirements to provide an individualized and appropriate or suitable education for a number of years. However, for teachers no doubt experiences have occurred over the past year where many procedures have changed for identifying and placing handicapped students. Teachers can get discouraged as an administration changes procedures that result in new or revised reports from new teaching staff. Therefore, teachers must be cognizant of the critical requirements of federal law and understand how those impact on their professional behavior. For that reason, several significant components of Public Law 94-142 have been selected for discussion here.

Least Restrictive Environment

One provision of Public Law 94-142 is the concept of placement of a child in the *least restrictive environment*. Too often educators interchange this new term with an old one—*mainstreaming*. Public Law 94-142 is not a mainstreaming law. The term mainstreaming does not appear in the law. Yet, this term has often evoked confusion in the profession and overreaction from the education community as a whole. If the term mainstreaming is phased out because of the different interpretations for everyone hearing and using it, regular educators may have a clearer understanding of what appropriate education for handicapped children in the least restrictive environment means. A word change alone is not enough.

Teachers must consciously change their thinking on how handicapped children receive special education and related services. Historically, children who required special education were pulled out of the regular program and put into self contained classes. This was too often an all or nothing approach since children either fit the program or they did not qualify for services. As early as 1961, Deno's (1974) cascade of services showed us that the continuum concept must be in effect in order to assure a range of appropriate options. The least restrictive environment provision requires that placement decisions be made on the basis of the individual's needs. No child can be removed from regular class participation any more than is appropriate for that child and Public Law 94-142 requires documentation in the IEP of the extent to which the child can participate in the regular program.

For many years, handicapped children were denied participation in regular physical education or vocational education programs. Annually, many teachers would negotiate with their colleagues to permit access for their handicapped students to these programs. The federal laws now guarantee that a handicapped student can not be discriminated against and must have access, where appropriate for the child, to physical education and vocational education programs, specially designed if necessary. In addition, the least restrictive environment provision means that handicapped children have access to the variety of educational programs and services available to nonhandicapped children such as art, music, industrial arts, and consumer and homemaking education. For teachers, this expands the programing options for their handicapped student on a systematic rather than random basis.

Procedural Safeguards

Due Process. A second requirement of federal provisions regards the necessary procedural safeguards established to ensure that handicapped students receive a free, appropriate public education. Reinforcing Constitutional guarantees, Public Law 94-142 sets forth procedures to ensure that due process is afforded each handicapped child at every point educational decisions are made. As soon as a child is referred for potential special education and related services, parents and teachers must be involved. Teachers who either initiate the referral and/or currently teach the child must document what interventions in learning have occurred for that child and identify the child's education strengths and weaknesses. As new assessments are conducted, the parents must be informed as to what information will be collected and how that information will be used. School district personnel have, over the past few years, made significant progress in informing parents of what is being done "to" their child. Emphasis needs to be placed on the "whys." When parents and teachers work together from the point of referral, few surprises occur as the IEP is developed.

Due process affords parents the right to a hearing if they disagree with the written IEP. When this occurs, and the procedures vary from state to state, the appeals process begins. The child shall remain in the current placement until a decision is rendered as to the appropriate program for the child. Just as teachers must be involved as the IEP is developed, they may also be involved when that IEP is being appealed. Minimally, the educational assessment information and reports that teachers have written become part of the evidence used at the hearing. In some instances, teachers will be requested to appear in support of the professional reports made. Occasionally this request to appear comes from the parents rather than the administration. A teacher's role has been and must continue to be to make sound professional decisions and professional judgments for each handicapped child. If these recommendations are judicious, then no teacher should have cause to worry about the hearing process. It is important to retain the child-advocate perspective rather than engage in adversarial relationships.

Confidentiality. Another procedural safeguard ensures the confidentiality of all the reports and records pertinent to the education of each handicapped child. While the IEP and all of the documents used to develop the IEP are confidential, parents and the child of majority age must be informed of their right to request access to all such records. This has implications for how each teacher will record, store and retrieve all personal and professional records.

Personnel Development

A third provision of Public Law 94-142 has direct implications for every regular and special educator working with handicapped children. Each local education agency must specify in writing the procedures to be used in the local implementation of the comprehensive system of personnel development established by the state education agency. Essentially, the federal law requires that inservice training be provided to both regular and special educators "and that activities sufficient to carry out this personnel development plan are scheduled" (Public Law 94-142, Final Regulations, Sec. 121a.380, 1977). Teachers must have input into the planning and designing of the personnel development activities so that the inservice training will be relevant to teacher needs. The entire process of developing IEP's requires some expanded roles and responsibilities of teachers. Competencies and skills required by teachers to successfully develop and implement each IEP may be a major area identified for purposes of professional development.

The policy areas of Public Law 94-142 presented here were selected to identify teacher issues that are peripheral to but necessary requirements of individualized education programs. Many changes regarding IEP's have occurred in schools to date. Teachers must review the basic IEP requirements to ascertain who must meet to develop the IEP and determine what constitutes a written document.

Meeting to Develop the IEP

The purpose of developing the IEP is to set forth in writing a commitment of resources that indicates what special education and related services will be provided to meet each handicapped child's unique needs. The IEP is a management tool that allows parents, teachers, and administrators to know what educational services have been committed. The purpose of an IEP is not to plan the total instruction of the handicapped child. Good instructional planning on a day to day and week to week basis is not a new phenomenon to competent teachers. Caution must be exercised that teachers and other support personnel recognize the distinction between instructional planning and the requirements as set forth in federal law that become the individualized education program (Torres, 1977 a, b, c). Otherwise, teachers may be trapped into documenting too much information in the meeting to develop the IEP. Public Law 94-142 (1975) requires that the IEP be

> developed in any meeting by a representative of the local educational agency or an intermediate educational unit who shall be qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of handicapped children, the teacher, the parents or guardian of such child, and whenever appropriate, such child. (Sec. 4(a)(4)(19))

Translating this federal requirement into practice requires decisions to be made at the local level regarding teacher participation in the IEP meeting. Difficulty in teacher participation in the development of an IEP frequently comes about in two ways. First, many state and local education agencies have tacked the IEP meeting on top of an already existing system of evaluating and placing handicapped children. The results too frequently find a cadre of people assembled including health care personnel, psychologists, social workers, administrators, perhaps each teacher that works with the child, and the parents.

The second difficulty regarding teacher participation occurs more often at the secondary level. Typically, a student may have four or five regular education teachers as well as at least one special educator. Which teacher(s) should be designated to participate in the IEP development? The authors would insist that those decisions must be made on a per child basis, with priority given to the teacher(s) who has the primary responsibility for implementation of the IEP. Recognizing that often the logistics of release time during school hours is a complex problem, particularly at the secondary level, the federal law does not require that all of the child's teachers develop the IEP. Clearly, some mechanism must exist for two way communication involving all IEP implementers to guarantee an exchange of relevant information. It is critical for teachers to have input into and understand the policy and procedures used in their district governing appropriate teacher participation.

The Written IEP

As each teacher knows by now, the content requirements of the IEP as set forth in Section 4(a)(4)(19)(A-E) of Public Law 94-142 (1975) are straightforward. Each IEP must be written and must contain statements regarding the following information:

1. Child's present levels of educational peformance.
2. Annual goals, including short term instructional objectives.
3. Specific special education and related services to be provided to the child and the extent to which the child will be able to participate in regular educational programs.
4. Projected dates for initiation and duration of services.
5. Appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether the short term instructional objectives are being achieved.

The responsibility for accomplishing the actual writing task itself is not federally legislated. Alternative arrangements may be made for recording the information. This task is not necessarily a teacher responsibility. Teacher input into district procedures regarding this responsibility is desirable. It is critical to remember that the IEP document is not totally new as a result of Public Law 94-142. In fact, 27 states have had for several years some sort of requirements for a written document for each handicapped child. (CEC Policy Research Center, 1977.)

Accountability and Teacher Advocacy

Much anxiety arises as teachers frequently perceive the IEP as an accountability measure that can be used against them if the student does not attain the specified annual goals or short term objectives.

It is imperative in viewing the IEP as a management tool that teachers, parents, and administrators realize that specific resources (i.e., time, personnel, money) are being committed by the education agency to the handicapped child vis-a-vis the IEP. But what about teacher liability for student mastery of skills? Public Law 94-142 does not require that any teacher, agency, or other person be held accountable if a child does not achieve the growth projected in the IEP. Clarification in the commentary that accompanies the regulations of Public Law 94-142 states that the intent is

> to relieve concerns that the individualized program constitutes a guarantee by the public

> agency and the teacher that a child will progress at a specified rate. However, this section does not relieve agencies and teachers from making good faith efforts to assist the child in achieving the objectives and goals listed in the individualized education program. Further, the section does not limit a parent's right to complain and ask for revisions of the child's program, or to invoke due process procedures, if the parent feels that these efforts are not being made. (Public Law 94-142, Final Regulations, Sec. 121a.349 (Comments), 1977)

While teachers may not be held responsible for pupil attainment of the annual goals and short term objectives, teachers are now, more than ever, in a situation where they can positively advocate for those services they need as required and specified in the child's IEP. However, as child advocates, teachers must be cognizant of the potential conflict they are placed in when having to confront the system. When evidence of program weaknesses or lack of services promised exists, the teacher, who is on the front line, is usually the first person to recognize the breakdowns in the system. It is at this point that teachers must place their responsibility to the children they serve ahead of all other concerns by responsibly advocating for the necessary remedies. Perhaps the most appropriate style of advocacy can be termed cooperative advocacy whereby all parties (i.e., teachers, administrators, support personnel, parents) contribute to make the system responsive to the child and ensure that the resources committed in the IEP are provided.

The quality of educational services for handicapped children resides in the abilities, qualifications, and competencies of the personnel who provide those services. Professionally trained and competent personnel engaging in positive public relations with parents, with other educators, and in the community at large are a force not to be dismissed lightly.

In the months to come, many opportunities for the exercise of teachers' most persuasive efforts to protect children's best interests will undoubtedly present themselves. Special educators will have the responsibility to share their specialized knowledge concerning handicapped children. They must be responsive as regular educators struggle with the implications that the least restrictive environment has on their class. Special educators must be able to explain why the child does not have to be removed from the regular class unless there are compelling reasons for doing so. Teachers must advocate for appropriate resources needed as a result of IEP requirements for special education and related services rather than being forced to make recommendations based on existing categorical programs. Finally, teachers must work toward changing attitudes about special education by focusing on the educational and developmental needs of handicapped children (CEC, 1976). These issues must be positively integrated into all aspects of professional activities in order to protect each handicapped child's right to a free, appropriate public education. Unless these rights are protected now, then potentially much may be lost later at the collective bargaining table.

Changing Roles and Responsibilities

With the changing times, modern technology, and the age of accountability, it is particularly important that teachers understand how their roles have changed and their responsibilities have increased. It is no longer enough to know how to competently work with students and guide their learning. Teachers must be informed, knowledgeable, and responsible to assure that they are contributing to the free, appropriate public education that each handicapped child is now guaranteed.

Consequently, teachers must be informed regarding the child rights and protections that exist. They have the right to be kept informed on relevant interpretations made by the courts or by policymakers at the federal, state, or local level that impact on a teacher's role in developing and implementing the IEP. They have the right to inservice training to prepare themselves for IEP participation. Teachers have the right to know current administrative procedures employed in their education agency and they need to understand how to impact on that system to effect positive and appropriate educational services through the IEP for each handicapped child. To that end, teachers also have the responsibility to seek out accurate and reliable information from a variety of sources regarding their professional rights and responsibilities in the development and implementation of the IEP. Because second hand information can sometimes be incomplete, misleading, or even faulty, teachers have a responsibility to collect accurate information. Nothing serves to erode a professional's credibility faster than inaccurate information.

Resources

There exists today a myriad of information regarding federal, state, and local policy requirements for the appropriate education of handicapped students. It is recommended that teachers make use of a variety of sources to obtain information that is most relevant to them. Their professional organization, The Council for Exceptional Children, has and will continue to make available to professionals and parents accurate information and policy interpretations. The authors have identified several policy documents that every teacher should have and should be familiar with. Minimally, these are as follows:

1. Public Law 94-142 and Section 504 of Public Law 93-112. Copies of both the federal statutes and regulations may be obtained from a local congressperson. Teachers should read firsthand what others are interpreting for them.
2. A copy of the state's special education laws and regulations.
3. A copy of the local application, which may be obtained from a special education administrator. Public Law 94-142 requires that each education agency assure to the state that a free, appropriate public education is provided every eligible handicapped child. A description of the policy methods and procedures must be described. Teachers may want to pay particular attention to the following sections: facilities, personnel, and services; personnel development (inservice training); parent involvement; IEP; procedural safeguards; and participation in regular education programs.
4. The state plan, which may be obtained from the state department of education. Each state education agency certifies to the federal government the assurances that every handicapped child in the state is receiving appropriate special education and related services. Teachers may want to review the following sections to determine where their district stands in relation to the rest of the state: comprehensive system of personnel development; IEP; procedural safeguards; least restrictive environment; and identification, location, and evaluation of handicapped children. Teachers may request permission to Xerox these sections or write to their state consultant for these portions.

A comparison of the above policy documents will enable teachers to better understand the background behind administrative decisions; the intent of school policy; and the distinction between federal, state, and local requirements in order to better advocate for policy change or better implementation as needed.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, it must be remembered that professionals themselves, both directly and through professional organizations, have largely influenced landmark federal legislation. While selected issues relating to the individualized education program have been discussed, others have yet to be identified. What remains to be known as September approaches is how teachers on the front line will continue to respond to the IEP mandates of Public Law 94-142.

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INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS: A LOOK AT REALITIES

Barbara Nadler and Ken Shore

Studies of the process of preparing individualized educational programs indicate that nationwide there is considerable variability in the ways this requirement of Public Law 94-142 is being met (Marver & David, 1979). Many local educational agencies have reported substantial difficulties in meeting IEP requirements, and some educators have pressed for legislative changes. Edwin Martin, Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of the Education for the Handicapped, cautioned that such changes would be premature and might add to, rather than minimize the confusion. The pressure to meet the requirements of the law may be great, but "we should not succumb to pulling up this tender plant to look at the roots" (Martin, 1979).

This article will examine some of the potential obstacles to the successful preparation and use of individual education programs and propose some ways of resolving the problems. The observations are derived from the authors' involvement in a recent project funded by the Bureau of the Education for the Handicapped (Sagstetter, 1977; Nadler & Shore, 1979) to examine practical issues related to the development and implementation of IEPs, as well as the authors' experiences as a special educator and a school psychologist.

The aim of the project was to solicit the views of persons most directly involved in and affected by the IEP process with the hope that these views would be considered in writing rules and regulations. The 175 persons interviewed included parents, students, teachers, administrators, and support personnel from 8 local school districts out of a total of approximately 600 districts in the state. As a result of analyzing the interview data, consistent themes and patterns emerged regarding potential barriers to the successful development and use of IEPs.

Teacher Involvement

Barbara Nadler

Ken Shore

The greatest obstacle to successful use of individualized educational plans appeared to be the absence of involvement of the teacher in its development. The teacher is ultimately the person who is responsible for carrying out the plan and thus is critical to its development. Numerous teachers interviewed told of educational plans which were written without consideration for the constraints and variables operating in the classroom and thus did not prove very useful. The teacher must be involved in a more than casual way to ensure that the IEP does not become merely a paper document.

A teacher who has participated in the design of the IEP is more likely to put into practice and be capable of guiding a program which he/she has had some role in developing. This involvement creates understanding as well as a sense of responsibility for goals and objectives. One special education supervisor was so adamant on the importance of teacher involvement that she suggested that state rules and regulations specify that the teacher be charged with responsibility for physically writing the individual program documents.

Perhaps this suggestion seems extreme, but in many districts teachers were only superficially involved, if at all, in the development of the educational plan. Although the federal law mandates their involvement, experience with other special education legislation suggests that any legislative mandate can be easily subverted in its application (Weatherley & Lipsky, 1976). A recent report by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) indicates that "teachers are becoming disenchanted with the planning team process due to small participation roles relative to the dominant roles administrators and school psychologist types have taken" (1978, p. 2).

While teacher involvement was uniformly recognized as essential, this participation must extend beyond passive observation. Teaching staff must be allowed sufficient time or scheduling flexibility to participate fully, as well as to receive adequate training to contribute constructively. Evidence suggests that these time and training requirements are not being met in many districts (NASDSE, 1978). It is our belief that the success of the IEP will vary directly with the degree to which the teacher is central to the process of the IEP development.

Such a change will require a support system that in many districts is inadequate. In addition, this primary role for the teacher will require a change in focus for the child-study team* and a reorientation of the teacher's role. In New Jersey, the child-study team has traditionally assumed the role of writing educational plans.

Perhaps a more realistic and relevant function for its members would be to serve as consultants to teachers in teachers' attempts to formulate the IEPs.

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*Child-Study Team is the term used in New Jersey to refer to a team consisting of at least a psychologist, learning consultant, and social worker. The major responsibilities of this team have typically included evaluation, classification, and placement.

A reorientation of the team to a consulting role reflects not a diminished role for child-study team personnel, but rather movement in the direction of a service which is significantly lacking and sorely needed. Indeed, the most common complaint regarding child-study team services voiced during the interviews was the lack of involvement of team members beyond that of placement. Many school personnel commented on what they viewed as the absence of any meaningful contact with child-study team members and expressed a desire for increased consultation services. Interestingly, child-study team members often expressed frustration regarding the almost exclusive use of their time for classification activities, with the result that little or no time was available for consultation and prevention programing.

Increased involvement of teachers in the IEP process holds the protential for other benefits to the educational system. More opportunities for staff interaction could minimize the separatism that has existed between child-study teams and other school personnel, a problem which has often interfered with services to handicapped children.

Involving parents may require yeoman efforts, but in the long run, the value of their participation will outweigh whatever efforts are expended.

While teacher organizations have consistently called for the involvement of teachers in critical decision-making processes, it seems that the mandated inclusion of teachers under federal law in the IEP process has created some degree of resistance.

Comments regarding violations of contractual agreements and unrealistic demands were not uncommon. Teachers will obviously need to have additional resources provided in terms of materials, people, time, and training in order to participate as effective members of the IEP committee; however, what may be more important is a reorientation in thinking by teachers as to the "nature of their role . . . from that of providers of instruction to instructional managers" (Safer, et al., p. 32). The changes that will be required to make educational systems more responsive to the needs of children demand flexibility in thinking.

Lack of Parent/Child Involvement

Many persons viewed the requirement that parents assume an active role in the development of the IEP as imposing a burden on the process. Parents were seen as poorly equipped to contribute to the development of the IEP and it was believed that their inclusion would inhibit the process. Nonetheless, it is our contention that their exclusion from the process would be more detrimental than any inconveniences and challenges posed by their participation.

If the IEP is to be a comprehensive document which reflects various ways of understanding the child, parents must be seen as valuable sources of information rather than as adversaries to be appeased or avoided. They can provide insights regarding the child's background as well as describe the child's strengths and weaknesses. Such knowledge is invaluable in writing objectives and devising strategies for intervention. Concern of school officials that parents may not be competent to help develop an IEP may be unwarranted in light of parents' general recognition of their own limitations. Most parents interviewed said that while they can provide useful information regarding their child, they believed that the determination of goals, objectives, and instructional methods is a more appropriate function for educators.

Parental involvement on the IEP team has additional benefits. The experience of helping to develop a program for their child may aid parents in understanding the educational process and may suggest to them ways to work with the child at home. In addition, parental involvement on the IEP team provides a communication link between the parents and the school, and increases the likelihood that parents will become involved in other educational areas.

In light of the advantages of parental involvement on the IEP team, ways need to be found to make parents more willing and better able to participate in the process. Interviewees offered numerous ways of increasing both the quantity and quality of parent participation, including suggestions that educators communicate with parents in more understandable, jargon-free terms; that parent advocates accompany parents to the IEP meetings; that schools conduct programs to enhance parents' understanding of the educational process; and that more social workers be employed in districts where parents, because of lack of transportation, work schedules, or other reasons, have difficulty in participating in the IEP process. While it is recognized that involving parents may require yeoman efforts, particularly in certain urban areas, in the long run the value of their participation will outweigh whatever efforts are expended.

The law also envisions that children, where appropriate, be included in the development of the individual programs. Nonetheless, a recent report indicates that students' participation in the planning process is virtually nonexistent (Schipper & Wilson, 1978). While there are unquestionably cases in which it would be inappropriate for children to participate in the IEP process, there are many handicapped youngsters, particularly older students, who can contribute constructively. If children are involved in the development of the program, it is reasonable to expect that their "ownership" of the program will enhance the likelihood of success.

Lack of Skills

The IEP process presumes that team members possess skills that interviewing revealed were not present. Success in writing and implementing IEPs demands a variety of skills, including "performing educational assessments, identifying and projecting appropriate goals and objectives, writing annual goals and short term objectives, collecting data, managing individualized classroom instruction, and communicating with parents" (Safer, et al., 1978, p. 29). Yet it is precisely these skills in which many educators are deficient. Perhaps it would be appropriate for these professionals to develop IEPs for themselves as a means of improving their own skills.

There has been an implicit assumption that training is required for some persons but not for all. Results for interviewing indicated that no group was uniformly proficient in the process, and, therefore, inservice training for all personnel and in a variety of ways will be required. Examination of state plans indicates that a wide array of training activities has been initiated. However, there appears to be a disproportionate distribution of training for particular groups; i.e., far greater numbers of parents and teachers than support or administrative personnel are being trained (United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1979). Compounding the problems is that "Much of inservice teacher education . . . is devoted to the superficialities of filling out the forms and like matters. There is a need to direct activities beyond mere surface requirements" (Reynolds, p. 29).

Inservice is traditionally offered in the form of workshops and conferences. The interactive process between and among people is perhaps even more important for skill development. The interaction required for successful development of the IEP provides participants with opportunities to learn from one another. A model which values the contributions of all encourages interdisciplinary learning. Child-study team members, for example, can learn from teachers as well as share with them their expertise. The exchange of ideas enhances the proficiency of each individual member, and more importantly, contributes to the development of a better program.

An expanding emphasis on consultation affords additional opportunities for individualized service. While consultation is usually viewed as support service to an individual for a specific problem, Reschely (1976) has suggested that consultation can increase the client's competence in dealing with similar problems in the future; can increase ability to apply mental health concepts; and can increase competence in functioning within the organization. Thus, a specific consultation can have an impact beyond the immediate situation by fostering skill development which can be applied to other situations.

While classification has been the basis for funding programs, the process seems to have become an end in itself.

Lack of Resources

Many persons interviewed said there is a need for more personnel and additional funding. While these factors may be regarded as requirements for success, another perspective suggests that a reorientation of existing resources may help to resolve these problems.

As an example, consider the use of child-study team members. By emphasizing consultation and acting in a resource capacity, child-study team members can enhance the possibility that teachers will develop the skills necessary to address many of the problems for which they are now initiating referrals. The long-term outcome of such a development may be a significant reduction in the number of referrals and the need for complete evaluations. This would free valuable time for child-study members to do further consultation, monitor the IEP process, and develop preventive programs.

A considerable portion of the child-study team's time has been devoted to the process of classification. While classification has been the basis for funding programs, the process seems to have become an end in itself. Regulation requires that children be classified in order for a state to be eligible for funding. It does not require that educational placements be made on the basis of those classifications. Considerable research and experience indicate that class placement on a categorical basis is questionable and may even be counterproductive (O'Grady, 1974; Sabatino, 1972). There would probably be far less time invested in the classification process and, therefore, more time available for direct service if class placement were not tied into the classification process and evaluation procedures were oriented to identifying needs rather than finding an appropriate label.

An approach which views classification as a means of establishing eligibility for services and then focuses on identifying needs is likely to be far less fraught with psychological, legal, and sociological ramifications than an approach which views evaluation as a means of determining placement. With such an approach, less extensive testing would be required; procedural matters related to classification could be streamlined; and parents would likely undertake fewer challenges to classification.

Interviewing revealed a wide range of differences among child-study teams and team members. The emphasis on territorial prerogatives and designation of function based entirely upon role has led to overlapping of activities and inefficient use of valuable resources. Follow-through of the IEP should be the responsibility of the team member deemed most appropriate for the particular situation. If the presenting problem appears to be within the competencies of the school psychologist, he/she, rather than the learning consultant, may be the appropriate person to consult with the teachers. Assistance from other team members is not precluded but primary responsibility should be determined by the individual situation.

A redistribution of child-study team time is another alternative for maximizing existing resources. Teams are often viewed and at times perceive themselves as unitary bodies. Whole teams may be involved in tasks that legitimately and logically could be assumed by one member of the team. The suggestion was made by more than one interviewee that entire team participation in the IEP conference is an example of inefficient use of time. It may be that one member of the team, the most appropriate one given the nature of the case, could share the results of child-study team evaluations and recommendations with the IEP committee. The presence of one member of the child-study team rather than three would also facilitate the functioning of the group process.

Many interviewees spoke of the potential problems which result from the increase in numbers of people who participate in the IEP committee meetings. Eliminating the necessity for two child-study team members would allow for a more workable group size and might contribute to better communication.

Lack of Follow-Through

In some of the districts visited, the production of an educational plan constituted the end of the process rather than the means of providing improved educational services. Assessments were completed, reports were written, due process requirements were complied with, and the educational plan was written, only to be put in the student's file or tucked away in the teacher's desk. It is conceivable that districts can presume compliance with IEP provisions without actually improving the quality of services to handicapped children.

Yet the IEP process, to be successful, assumes that the production of the document is just one step in a multistage process. The IEP must be implemented and monitored so that the extent to which the objectives are being met can be evaluated. This provides the basis for future educational planning. Failure to carry out the plan renders meaningless the efforts that went into its development. Failure to evaluate the effectiveness of the IEP may perpetuate ineffective or inappropriate classroom programs.

The success of the IEP is, therefore, dependent on the quality of the monitoring process. Interviews with school officials indicated that much of the current monitoring is superficial in nature. For example, in some districts, monitoring took the form of ensuring that the IEPs were written: the monitoring ended there. In effect, the development of the document was perceived as the goal.

Monitoring of the IEP, to be maximally effective, should be a continuing process in which the information obtained is fed back into the process and appropriate revisions made. In addition, monitoring should ideally assess the individual program from a variety of perspectives, including the process through which it was developed, the degree to which the program is being followed, and the impact upon the child. There are numerous forms of monitoring. Some monitoring can best be done and should be done by outside sources. For example, procedural issues—Are IEPs prepared? Do they include the mandated information? Are services being provided? These questions should be assessed by state and federal monitors.

Substantive monitoring to assess the impact of the plan on the child is best done in consultation with the teacher by someone who is familiar with the district and its personnel, for example a child-study team member. As one interviewee pointed out, you must be part of the district to be able to judge the implementation of the process. While monitoring procedures will vary with time demands, characteristics of the districts, and individual preferences, it is important that monitoring be perceived as essential.

Various models have been proposed which can be adapted to the monitoring of IEPs (Kiresuk & Sherman, 1968; Maher, 1977). In addition, a monitoring procedures manual is available from the National Association of State Directors of Special Education. The manual describes basic monitoring steps, examples of successful approaches, and a description of the federal monitoring system. Whatever plan is adopted, the measure of staff effectiveness should be the degree to which it has helped meet children's needs rather than the number of IEPs it has written, or how many children it has classified.

Lack of Administrative Support

That this section has been left for last is no indication that it is of low priority. Administrative support may indeed be the key to the success of the IEP process inasmuch as all the other variables are in one way or another dependent upon the support of school administrators and board of education members. These groups have the potential to significantly influence the IEP process. Their level of support will become evident through their willingness to provide the necessary services—release time for teachers, for example. District attitudes, which in our observations ranged from enthusiastically supportive to blatantly subverting, are likely to have a ripple effect throughout the district, influencing how staff within the district relate to special education and how special education personnel are likely to feel about themselves and their profession.

While the suggestions regarding changes in role orientation and procedural modifications can facilitate the process of developing and implementing individual educational programs, in the end the success of the IEP process will depend on the commitment of individuals to improving the quality of education for handicapped children. Thus, a primary focus in any district should be to ensure that those involved in the IEP process understand its rationale, perceive it as a potentially effective educational strategy, and do not feel overburdened by the procedure. Morale problems resulting from a failure to attend to these considerations can undermine whatever other efforts have been expended in the process.

The individual program planning efforts have already reaped significant benefits. Considerably more children are now served (Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1979). Teachers are experiencing a greater degree of job satisfaction because they can see the results of their planning (NEA, 1978). Regular classroom teachers are more aware of the rights of handicapped children (Education Turnkey Systems, 1979). Teachers have found the IEP process an aid in analyzing their teaching, planning lessons, and motivating students through systematic record keeping (Schipper & Wilson, 1978). Most importantly, it legalizes a philosophy of individualization of instruction, namely, that a role of the school is to meet the unique educational needs of every child.

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